

PLUS: THE GUIDE, THE READER, AND REALITY CHECK

# Esquire

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

## TOM CRUISE BITES BACK

Vampire or victim?

BY JENNIFER CONANT

MARCH 1994 • \$2.50

PETE HAMILL

When Tyson Met Tolstoy

JOHN TAYLOR

The Demons of Sex

JULIE BAUMGOLD

Ol' Blue Eyes and the Indians

TAD FRIEND

River's Death, Phoenix's Life

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## **Lestat, C'est Moi**

BY JENNIFER CONAWAY

Until he got the lead in David Geffen's production of *Interview with the Vampire*, Tom Cruise had a charmed career. Now it seems that all sorts of people—especially author Anne Rice—want to drive a stake through his heart.



## The Lost Daughter

BY JOHN TAYLOR

There's a mania that's been set loose on the land, fueled by fear, rage, and the dark, barely understood demons of sex and memory. One family's haunting story.

---

## Frank and the Fox Pack

BY JILLIE BATEMAN

Welcome to Foxwoods, one of the nation's richest casinos, where Ol' Blue Eyes plays the big room and an Indian tribe that was on the verge of extinction has truly hit the jackpot.

*Photographs by Harry Benson*



## The Education of Mike Tyson

BY PETE HAMILTON

Once he punched men for a living. Now he's hitting the books—Tolstoy, Voltaire, Machiavelli. In a rare interview behind bars, the ex-champ reveals that he's found redemption, and, yes, he will fight again.

## River, with Love and Anger

BY TOM FRIEDMAN

Even in a town that routinely destroys its young, the death of River Phoenix was hard to reconcile: How could the tormented drug addict who died on a Hollywood sidewalk be that same fallen angel who had been out to heal the world through love and music?



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Answers on page 10

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passenger air bags, you would expect from a car of this caliber. Which can be a beautiful thing in itself.

**SOME THINGS ARE WORTH THE PRICE.**



## Reality Check



The pope's wrath, Salzberger's secret, Yasir's PR man, and  
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## The Esquire Reader

Collected excerpts of new books, stories, plays, and works in progress.



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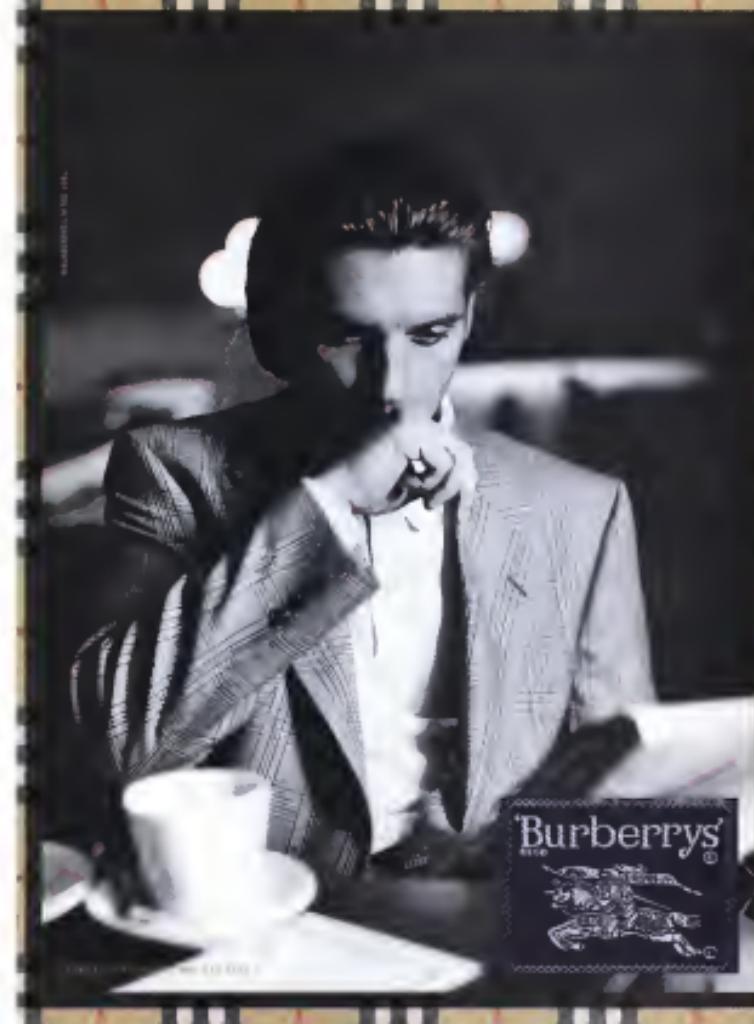
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# Reporter



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## THE SOUND AND THE FURY

### Death of a Sailor

CHIP BROWN's "The Accidental Captain" (December 1995) is brilliant. In a former life in the U.S. military, I reviewed investigations and pursued female and male military suspect and accused of homosexual tendencies, words, and deeds, and I prosecuted and defended military persons accused of "homosexual acts violating the uniform code of military justice." As a civilian, Chip Brown has clearly defined the human tragedy of each of the principals in this case, and his eloquence in pursuing every aspect in this complex story is even more impressive in the face of the Department of Defense's not-so-subtle observations.

—GEORGE GOODMAN  
Dallas, Tex.



man be exploded in a fit of homosexual rage? There are Terry Helvey's being created every minute in that country. Let us hope that they and their parents can be helped before it's too late.

—KENNY GOLDBERG  
Redondo, Calif.

CHIP BROWN'S wonderful article will keep the tragic story of Allen Schindler fresh in the minds of all who read it for a long time to come. I wonder how Terry Helvey's tragic father, who might have son to tell and have from the days of his childhood, life when his son caused those teachings to the letter. I hope the Navy learns from Allen's death and educates its sailors to understand that gay men are not to be hated and used as targets of violence. Everyone is negatively affected by homophobia, not just gay. Look where Terry Helvey's hate took him—prison for Terry.

—NAME AND ADDRESS WITHHELD

### Pride and Prejudice

RICHARD BEN CRAMER's obituary R for Great Britain ("Up the England," December) was beautifully written and remarkably accurate. He pointed out the country's collective enthusiasm for bad news, the jealousy accorded those who dare to succeed, the aspernicious rumors of royalty and Parliament.

—TONY FLETCHER  
New York, N.Y.

RICHARD BEN CRAMER's piece is basically a far more illuminating expose of the curious feelings for Great Britain many Americans exhibit than of the decline of the kingdom. It is true that England does not possess the "can do" philosophy that the U.S. prizes, but it has been in existence for considerably more than two and a quarter centuries. That may explain the vague sense of moral mien Americans derive from their visits, and a certain pride in having given the world more than McDonalds, Coca-Cola, the gorified pages of big business, conspicuous consumption, and the sound bite.

—PAULINE O'LEARY  
Dallas, Tex.

CHIP BROWN'S ACCIDENT OF ALLEN SCHINDLER'S DEATH left me angry because the Navy went so abetted the master into the arms of those they expect gays and lesbians to remain in. And I'm depressed because Schindler was just beginning to live his life with honesty and was beaten to death for it.

—G. SCOTT CONNOLY  
San Antonio, Calif.

THE DEATH of Allen Schindler was a tragedy that could have been prevented. The command of the ship was the ultimate, since of the officers and enlisted men made comments to me such as "Who cares if you're gay?" "You're not having problems with anyone," and "We're a family on this ship." Three days after my return, I received a letter Schindler's discharge should have taken a few days at least.

—R. S. LUNDEN  
Schaumburg, Ill.

I WAS PROFOUNDLY MOVED by Chip Brown's account of the murder of Seaman Allen Schindler. While Schindler has become a martyr for homosexuals in the military, I am surprised that his sacrifice has not become a symbol for the virtues of civil about. Terry Helvey was brutally murdered as a child. Is it any wonder that as a young

WHAT DO I DO to Richard Ben Cramer? He seems to have left my house in a very sour mood after what I recall as a civilized conversation during an unusually busy day. Yes, it is true that I was fatigued enough (I am a contributing editor of *Esquire UK*) to "fit him in" at short notice between other long-standing appointments on the publication day of my latest book, *The Devilish Omen*. I had been asked to help him out with an article on Britain, little did I know that while I finished a prior assignment, Cramer was making an inventory of the contents of my house, including the royal books whose titles Cramer noted down were such other works of mine as *Good Blood Army*, *Mountains Don't Shake*, and *Big Deal: A Year as a Professional Bike Player*. As to my impressive shelves of CDs, Had Cramer asked, he would have learned that my current work in progress is a biography of Tchaikovsky. Mine can now live by royal bread alone.

—ANTHONY HOLDSOM

London, England

F.S. The "public parkland" onto which any "no garden" hawks is in fact an no-to-public spaces.

WHAT PREPOSTEROUS nonsense! Richard Ben Cramer spewed forth his scorn against the British. To be sure, they have problems, having been American ambassador there for two years. I know those problems firsthand. But to bring each fault out and make us wince it dry was, well, dry, boring, and unbalanced. Finally, when push comes to shove, the only country in the world the U.S. can depend on is Great Britain. I say God bless it.

—HENRY E. CATTIO  
San Antonio, Tex.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The January article "Ouch! Ouch! An Embarrassment" mistakenly referred to the independent John Shepherd as deceased. He is, in fact, alive and well. Esquire apologizes to Mr. Shepherd for the error. The *Many My Summer Story*, described in the article, is based on James' summer by Mr. Shepherd and not on his life.

Letters the editor should be mailed with your address and daytime phone number to: *The Sound and the Fury*, c/o Vice President, *Esquire*, 120 West 57th Street, New York, N.Y. 10019. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.

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## LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

# My Turn

WE SPENT MY LIFE in magazines, as for me Esquire is both an adventure and a homecoming. • Touring Harold Hayes's great run at Esquire in the late '60s and early '70s, I was at *Newsweek*, where each week, it seemed, the story list read: Civil Rights, Assassination, Vietnam, Watergate. Each month in those years, a steaming magazine called Esquire exploded in my mailbox with the New Journalism of Norman Mailer, Gay Talese, Nora Ephron, Tom Wolfe, and others. And there were those memorable covers: Swifty Lazar as Santa Claus, Andy Warhol dressing in a whirlpool of Campbell's tomato soup—lots of the times Esquire's seal made you. *New York* magazine, where a group of brilliant writers created a sensation nearly every week.

After editing *Newsweek*, I moved on to edit *New York* all through the '80s, when the city reigned—for better or worse—as the capital of the world. Now, as that magazine enters its seventh decade, it's my turn at Esquire.

What can you expect from us? Esquire has a vivid genetic code and an enviable heritage of journalism with a literary feel; compelling fiction, and sound judgment about how men should go about their lives. When Esquire is in stride, it's both smart and useful, a unique blend of sophisticated vision and extraordinary guidance on finding the best of everything.

This month I have the first step in what I'm determined will be a fusion of Esquire's heritage with fresh impulses to propel the magazine toward the millennium.

There are writers new to Esquire, like John Taylor, and others, like Pete Hamill and Julie Baumgold, also from our pages too long. There are new sections: Jeannette Walls's unsophisticated Chronicle, the definitive Esquire Guide, a monthly handbook of all you need to know about a subject vital to a man's life (this month's topic: sexual performance); and the Esquire Reader, a sampling of each month's hottest books and drama (the first Reader includes excerpts from John Updike's exotic new novel, *Brazil*, and Tony Kushner's new play, *Angels*).

And each month, there's the Gentleman section, the last word on the most interesting new clothes.

Esquire's columns are a celebration of men's passions—sports, politics, music, and food among them. From now on, we'll be giving you even more, with regular travel tips, book reviews, and road maps to the Electronic Superhighway; plus Phil Patten's savvy reports on practically every man's first and true love: cars. On the back page you'll find Mr. Peepers, Esq., the best traveling companion you'll ever have in the high life—and the low.

Whatever the elements, Esquire's job—in the '80s, the '90s, or the '00s—is to surprise, provoke, reward, and fascinate the reader. Here we go.



Edward Kresser  
Editor in Chief





## BACKSTAGE WITH ESQUIRE



**A** S KEITH RICHARDS was rumored to have done through much of the Seventies, maga-  
zines also need to change their blood occasionally. They do this by bringing in new  
writers, and this month we introduce two  
fresh voices to our pages—John Taylor and  
Jennifer Walk—and welcome back a thud—  
John Baumgärd. Senior writer John Taylor begins his jour-  
nalism career at *Newsweek* and *BusinessWeek* and then soon  
on to *Marshall*, inc. In April he joined the staff at *New York*  
magazine, where he wrote a host of memorable cover stories  
and was later the political columnist. In addition to his mag-  
azine work, Taylor has written two books, *Surfing the Magic*  
*Kingdom* and *Conan of Auburn*.

His first piece for *Esquire*, "The Lost Daughter" (page 79),  
is an eerie account of a Maryland family devastated by accusations  
of sexual abuse that surfaced during shaggy—the  
controversial and all-too-rampant phenomenon known as recovered memory. "Recovered memory undermines these  
Enlightenment assumptions we've had about human beings  
as free agents, capable of self-understanding," says Taylor.  
"Instead, it gives us people who are envious to themselves."

Combining editor Julie Baumgärd, who writes for *Esquire* in the early Seventies and has been a longtime contributor to *New York*, pads double duty this month. She files her first *Mr. Rogers*, big eyelids, an as-is eye view of Donald Trump's wedding ("Mariah Carey Takes Five," page 168), and travel to Ledyard, Connecticut, where come gambling has brought the Mashantucket Pequot tribe both riches and Frank Sinatra ("Frank and the Pon Pon," page 202). A self-described "gambling woytar," Baumgärd has been in casinos all over the world and says she finds them "very relaxing—especially if you don't gamble." Her first novel, *Custom of Habit*, was published by Alfred A. Knopf, and she is at work on her second.

Keep your stories to yourself! If you ever see *Esquire's* new snooty big-journalist Walk, coming your way. Each month an *Esquire* Check, Walk will bring us "the lowdown on the highdown" in politics, publishing, Hollywood, and society. Walk began reporting for Brooklyn's *Phoenix* at seventeen and went on to write *New York*'s *Intellegencer* column.

"I really wanted to be a war correspondent," Walk says, "but then I realized my hero would get stuck in a foxhole."

Combining editor **Pete Hamill** over Mike Tyson a decade ago through Tyson's memoir, *Cassius Clay* (Hamill even modeled a character on Tyson in his novel *Red and Blood*) The boy he saw then is nowhere near the man he saw recently at the Indiana prison where Tyson is serving four to a crime he says he didn't commit. Today, box office is puncturing library cards instead of Mach "Blood" Green and reading his way through prison ("The Education of Mike Tyson," page 92). "I don't think Tyson should be in jail," Hamill says, "but that he is using his time to do him in a triumph." Hamill's book *The Drunken Life* (which *Esquire* excerpted in January) was just published by Little, Brown.

Lucrative editor **Will Blythe** has helped bring some fine writers to *Esquire*: Mark Richard, Dennis Johnson, William Vollmann, to name a few. Now Blythe, who conducted last *Sex Valence* (biggest story star of *Esquire* fiction (Atlantic Monthly Press)), is overhauling a new section, the *Esquire Reader* (page 149). "It will be a sweetly eclectic assemblage, a literary magazine within the magazine," Blythe says. "We'll try to keep the bedfellows as odd as possible—Madame Sojourner Truth and Billie Holiday, say, or whoever is doing interesting new work in any genre." Blythe, an accomplished writer in his own right, he was included in *The Best American Short Stories*—also begins a books column this month (page 192).

Also featured this issue are two pieces about actors who once led seemingly flawless lives: Tom Cruise and River Phoenix. Combining editor **Jeffrey C. Grant** profiles Cruise and the controversy surrounding his upcoming *Interview with the Vampire* ("Lucky, 'C'mon Man," page 70), and combining editor **Ted Friend** looks at how in his premature death, Phoenix, true to his name, has risen to become a Hollywood legend ("River with Love and Anger," page 102).

Finally, last year **Michael Sragow** told *Esquire* readers how to live longer. Now he tells us how to live longer in the August *Esquire Guide: Sexual Performance* (page 179). "The two aren't unrelated," he says. "For a man, maintaining his sexual life is a good way to ensure his continued good health. It's also a lot more fun than *StarMaster*." *at*



# GIORGIO ARMANI

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# Reality Check

Offbeat

## Quinn the Eskimo



Sally Quinn out by that other power blonde.

**T**HREE DAYS earlier than *Seinfeld* on the White House snatching pole may be wiser. **Sally Quinn**, it seems, Quinn began drawing in **Hillary** during the presidential campaign, when the wife commented disapprovingly about the Clinton Laundry, though, Quinn has been taking outspurts at the far-circled First Lady. "There are some sourious stories going around about Hillary," says one right-fist. "And Sally's the strong link in the rumor chain."

On the flip side, Quinn is said to be snatching over her husband and the state troopers' accusations. "I'm sure she had other things on her mind." Like what, that health care thing?

Peace Signs

## My People Can Help Your People

**O**NE OF YESTERDAY *Yasser Arafat's* image problems has been just a matter of bad public relations. Or to think **Pierre Salinger**, the former press secretary to **John F. Kennedy**, who is eager to handle the PLO leader's PR.

Salinger, who works in the Washington office of Burson-Murray, presented the idea last fall. "He was told no, the fire had already turned down the PLO a year earlier," says a Burson insider. "He was shown the correspondence. From these negotiations, he said, times have changed and came up with all these creative ways to convince Arafat to come on board."

Though Salinger cautions that "nothing has been sealed yet" between Burson and the scruffy pauperizer, the source believes that his behind-the-scenes manueverings have already worked. "He used to just read stories about her being a terrorist. Now you read profiles of her wife and what a swell guy he is. Does this mean she's it or that's it?"

### Current Affairs

## Life of O'Reilly

**I** T'S A SURPRISE that a tabloid TV show prepares for national office? **Bill O'Reilly** believes it is. The author of *Inside Edition* is contemplating running for the House of Representatives. O'Reilly says he was called several years ago by **George Bush**'s then-political director, Ronald Kassman, who asked him to run against Massachusetts representative **Barney Frank**. O'Reilly declined then but is considering going after a New York seat "because I'm richer now." A low-and-enter kind of guy, O'Reilly says he would bring back a version of classic garage putting, converts in "military-style prisons" to work 10-hour days of jobs like digging ditches. Sounds more like an episode of *America's Most Wanted*.

### Strange Love

## There Goes the Bride

**D**ON'T SNOB that **Jeffrey Maxwell** and **Catherine MacKinnon** just got **Janet Malcolm's** favorite psychiatrist and **Carla Bousman's** favorite anesthesiologist divorced last year when they announced that they were engaged, but lately MacKinnon has told people the marriage "may never happen." "They're just too different," a friend says. MacKinnon's office, however, dozen my split. Maybe she needs to get herself a good shrink. \*



Mr. Nice Guy

### White People

## Little Big Roseanne

**R**OSEANNE ARNDT has been known to make a fellow or two see red, but not crimson. The producer of a movie that's being called a woman's *Figure Cocktails* had the TV heavy-weight Roseanne was initially interested in *Drum Girl*, because she's been looking for a role that's nontraditional and nonstereotypical. Arndt, however, axed the part when she found it was also



newschool—the lead character is a Sesame Street. The producers also approached **John Roberts** and **Debra Moore**, but it looks as if the script will have to be rewritten before any star takes the role. Except, maybe, **Ted Danson**.



Fried wedding

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# Man At His Post

EDITED BY ANITA LECLERC

## How Many Mr. Octobers Equal One Miss September?

EVEN FOR PEOPLE WHO don't normally go in for this sort of thing, the glass-eyes almost made of Alberto Vargas have a certain charm. There's nothing snooty about his work, even when it is shrunk to trading-card size, a format associated with baseball players and vintage French photos. Now 21st Century Archives has produced packs of Vargas (sans the s for his *Esquire* drawings) "collectible trading cards," which showcase the illustrator's work. The stream of pinup girls Vargas produced for *Esquire* from 1940 to 1945 might be regarded as technically impeccable, devotional kitsch, created by a Peruvian artist who came to the States just out of his teens and spent the rest of his life cloning the visual essence of the strapping gung-ho woman. It should be noted that in the relatively buxom '50s, the Varga girl began to suffer from a certain come-lot pessimism—Heiber borrowed the look to launch his magazine. Still, in the work of Vargas and of his *Esquire* colleague George Petty (the subject of a new pack of cards), there is a bountifulness, even a naivete, that is notably absent from soft-porn Playboy Bunnies and Penthouse Pets, who, functioning basically as electrodes in search of a male zipper, looking away or with her eyes closed, using in her filthy wrap, the Varga girl seems to exist in some private domain of she-animal joy. As with her latter-day descendants, the Victoria's Secret models, men seem to be beside the point. All we want to do is watch 'em.



Cards for sale:  
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from the '40s



## DESIGN

## Record Your Disc Here

THE MINIESTIC words to do to the cassette tape when the CD did to the LP kill a dead. The MD itself is about half the size of a CD and permanently housed in its own carrying plastic case. Last year you could buy a MiniDisc machine larger than a portable CD player. But among this month's Sony's MD-RX1 recorder/player (top), the first of a new generation of machines from Ariva, Hitachi, RCA, Sharp, and others that are smaller than any Walkman as small as the cassette tapes the MD aims to make obsolete.

Make them obsolete because MDs, whose sound is hardly distinguishable from that of CDs, record, allow for playing any song at any point, and are, unlike CDs, "joggable." They can take a bumping sound and keep on pumping sound, thanks to what the engineers call a digital "holding pen" (mag-

use a coast full of ornery electrons) that stores ten seconds of sound and berate it out in a steady and drive over any terrain. So the MD is the runner's choice, the boom box and the car player of the future (Ford already offers one).

The MiniDisc is actually two systems in one. Pre-recorded discs there are now some three hundred to do—see stamped out in the same huge factory in Tama, Japan that has made that Hoover

say the owner's CD capital blank discs are of a wholly different type. When you record, the laser beam a projector of the disc's surface to a resistor-ever-warm 400 degrees, a temperature at which microcrystals of molybdate oxides become insusceptible to the ratiocination of a tiny magnet. Magnets

alter the polarity of the crystals, which means adding to you or me but everything to the reading laser. Each move and microcrystal one bit, one may one of about 160's permanent, at least until you decide to override Snoop Doggy Dogg with "Hound Dog."

—PHIL FATTOR

See with its Sony's  
MD-RX1 recorder/player  
makes digital joggable.

ABOVE: RICHARD REINER

# V2

BY VERSACE  
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## TRAVEL

# L.A. When It Settles

**E**ARTHQUAKES, fires, even Michael Jackson and Heidi Fleiss notwithstanding, L.A. is still the fulsome and faceted city of calamity still fresh in our minds, we might remind ourselves of the reasons we've always loved the city. What makes it unique is its holy trinity of wonderful, guilty pleasures: sand, stars, babes.

**BEACH:** Because L.A. is the endless summer beach city, you might as well enjoy a room with a view or an ocean view, especially over the pink dome dome, the Beverly Hills Hotel, has been closed for a three-year renovation. The caravansary of the season is *Marin's on the Beach*, a swanky Adirondack hunting lodge right on the sand. There are fine bed rooms and jacuzzis overlooking the water. The funk of Venice Ocean Front Walk, which is a surfer's SoHo, is at a brief Rollie-hike ride away while the glitz of Santa Monica's Third Street Promenade, L.A.'s own Via Veneto, is mere Gucci steps. Even more: cheaper, and funkier at the same time *Shangri-la* on Ocean Avenue, a bit of Miami Beach on the Pacific and the sun is an excess of models and



photographers who prefer it to the Chateau Marmont.

**STARS:** Because the stars are different from you and me in that they do virtually nothing for themselves anymore, such as food shopping or fixing their Bentley, the only nice places to see them are restaurants. Given the Siberian seating policies at Spago, you may be eating guacamole pasta but tasting lambie pa' ahead you have a powerful press agent who can get you an A table. There are other, more delicious options.

The best food in L.A. is Asian, and at the very best Asian restaurants an armed guard with a handgun escorts you through a combination strip mall air and Wilshire strip a smidge of serenity where the finest and, also, deepest Japanese food canonic Tokyo is served. In *Sam's*, a favorite of Warren Beatty, Marlon Brando, and their employees, the shoguns of Matsuhisa and Sushi. For says a head, you'll eat the pick of Tokyo's top fish markets, from

which everything is flown in. The Chinatown of "I'm Chinatown, Jim," can't joke anymore, having degenerated into gang wars and tourist befores. There is, however, a new Chinatown Monterey Park, ten minutes east of downtown. The home of Hong Kong-style capital Monterey Park is a suburban Chinatown, with Chinese grocery, Chinese grocery, Chinese rice menus, and dozens of superb Chinese restaurants. Prime ribs pass here in *Steak Bar* (Seduced Butterfield), which is open until 4 a.m. and is a haunt not only of Hollywood gastronomes but also of the local gilded youth, who prefer god-awful peach and sea cucumber to Foiburgers and Olio Dots for their après-dub restaurants.

**BABES:** The pure ones last up at *Red Fish, Blue* in Santa Monica for Alice Waters-like veggie fare, while the elegant duds of MAMA, (just across whatever), induces female lemons at *La Patisserie* on Sunset. Then, which is like Carnes in feline taste

Check if your hotel has guest privileges at the *Spa City Club*, & or the *Spa Grande*, prime cruising grounds for the physically unprepared. Or with your dark, wear your Japanese designer threads from Manfield, rent a Mercedes from Budget, and try to oust the noisy doormen at *Bel air*. If you fall, cruise down the Sunset Strip to model intensive *On the Run*. And, at the moment, the new *Whiskey Bar* in the Sunset Marquis is goddess central.

If you meet someone you like, show her how cultured you are by taking her to the magnificence *Levantine Mirror* to see The Blue Ray a Gutenberg Bible, and have a hand-molded rubber horse created a mile-long even Asian Spelling can't approach. For a Wild West outing, take her to the *Mountain Man* in Little Tujunga Canyon, a shotgun club where Lake Perry and other young



gods let off steam. Whatever she da, top it off by going to Boyle Heights and having your own mariachi band to serenade your chosen girl from the bandit who was to be drafted like day laborers in front of the primo Mexican fish house, *La Bodega de Guadalajara*. It's a grand, theatrical gesture, but, after all, you're in Hollywood.

—WILLIAM STADTMAN



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DEBUTS

## Blue Angel

**I**T'S BEEN A GOOD decade of America has been following Amy Brenneman into her bedroom. Tuesday night as the buxom Officer Jamie Lassiter in ABC's hit cop show, *NYPD Blue*. Every other episode or so, Brenneman, who in what seems like another life, was a competitive religion major at Harvard, donches the pale, vulnerable Catholic but of Detective John Kelly (David Caruso) and takes prime-time television to a realm of anxiety it has never before visited. "Yeah, I think it's a bit of a gauze," she says of the blue screen. "But it's not like the parts I was up for when I first went to L.A. You show up, you fuck the star, you get killed."

Officer Lassiter is a raw girl, but life is hard for her, and she's never afraid to make it harder. She helps her crooked-cop father, the god in bed with the Mafia. Then she goes to bed with Kelly, reconsiders the deal, and blows away the Mafia don. "She's so dark," Brenneman says admiringly. "She's the cool part of me." If you spend even a little time with Brenneman, any number of the parts are on display. In person, she shucks the fake-American glamour with the television makeup—the issue of hair and otherwise teeth come together in a face no less sexy for its honest, Eric Cline pelfer (Imagine a lobotomy pump). She exudes a boppin', riffling verbal energy and a craving for human connection. "I'm a smoocher," she says. "It's that screwing thing."

Combine that "openness" with Officer Lassiter's edgy trigger finger and you've got someone who's not afraid to challenge her creators, Steven Bochco and company. Says Brenneman: "They have to figure out what the women on the show are doing besides the sexual trifflingen thing."

—JOSEPH HOOPER

**Amy Brenneman:** I took a Harvard grad to make the *NYPD Blue*

BLAKE LITTLE

# RALPH LAUREN



THE POLO SANDAL



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And then there are things like a new welding device (called a "tubogun") that also ensures the dimensional integrity of the body. And a Dynamic Vehicle Test done on rollers at 65 mph to check that the engine, trans-

mission, air conditioning, electronics and cruise control all work properly. So much for the science part. Better strap yourself for the rocket part: The Z28 is propelled by a 225 hp 5.7-liter V8. Harnessed to a 6-

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# How Much Spaghetti Can You Eat?



**T**HIS IS THE WAY you're going to eat in the second half of the year. For lunch you'll drop into a hole-in-the-wall with a name like **Tratt** ("the trattorie") for gelati bruschette topped with white beans, prosciutto, garlic, onions, and olive oil, or a plate of polenta with braised sausage in tomato sauce. For a light casual dinner, you'll head for **Pasta**, a bright contemporary eatery with market serving wood-fired seafood like salmon, trout, and mussels with such mayonnaise or sea bass with polenta and sweet garlic puree sauce—for a top price of \$15. On another evening, you'll get together with friends at **Il Radicchio** to share a tortilla, thin-crusted pizza, an enormous braising pot of spaghetti with your choice of twenty-three different sauces, or a perfect spit-roasted chicken that comes searing to your plate. And once in a while, for a grand, celebratory dinner you'll join the power brokers at **Galilei** for pumpkin risotto with sage and black truffles; lobster risotto, roast pheasant with grappa-roasted chestnuts, and a thirty-year-old Barolo.

To eat that way next year, you'll have to live in Washington, D.C., because that's where chef Barbara Donata has already laid out a cluster of restaurants by those



**Mr. Italy:** Barbara Donata has seven trattorie, and these schools of pasta around every corner

names within a one-mile radius of Dupont Circle. But it's not whale, and I guarantee you'll see copies of Donata's menu and concept popping up around the country the way California grille did in the '80s. He has clearly taken America's infatuation with Italian food to its next logical level. Without diminishing the emergence of Galileo—one of the greatest Italian restaurants in America—Donata has set the template for quick, casual eaters for the next decade.

Except for the very expensive Galilei what Donata is doing is offering more and more for less and less. You won't find a more lavish daily aperitivo tray than I Marti's. No one else showcases the variety of Italian seafood as Donata does at Poco—how often do you run across escargot with bot-

teggi (the dried rice of tamari) and wild mushrooms in an American restaurant? And while the idea of serving just pasta, spaghetti, and rosemary meat sounds like a gimmick, you'll never eat a better price than the bubbly wood-oven-baked variations at Il Radicchio, and you'll never get a better deal than the all the pasta you can eat for six bucks policy. As Donata says in a slyly note, "How much spaghetti can anyone eat?"

#### Mr. Donata's Neighborhood

**Galilei:** 1100 Twenty-first Street NW, 202-345-7799

**Il Marti:** 4000 Eighteenth Street NW, 202-822-8814

**Il Radicchio:** 6009 New Seventh Street NW, 202-467-2700

**Poco:** 2016 P Street NW, 202-467-



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# Professor Mack, Phone Home

**W**HAT'S TO SAY what is crazy? Can we safely dismiss Dr. John Mack, esteemed professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and Pulitzer Prize winner, who came to the realization on January 16, 1990 ("one of

those dates when everything in your life changes"), that space aliens exist?

That day, Mack came across accounts of sane, rational people who claimed they had been abducted by aliens. Mack didn't find the research at all crazy. "I saw a kind of trauma that didn't fit anything. I had come across



spacecraft. Ed, a virgin, has his first sexual experience with an alien and even remembers fondly her breasts; Rose feels guilty

about shooting on his wife and kids on earth because he has an alien family as well (or is it the other way around)?

Mack's premise requires

an enormous extrapolation

kind of leap of faith.

"People always think that aliens are either real or psychological,

and I ask them to consider

the possibility that they are

somewhere both," he says.

"But that means our entire

definition of reality has to

change." While humans live

wholly within the dimensions

of space and time, Mack

believes that aliens

probably dwell in complex,

alternative dimensions we

can't perceive, which is one

of the reasons it has been so

difficult to make the case for

their existence—their very

"reality" may transcend our

powers of perception.

"I have always had the

sense that there was some-

thing beyond what we

know," he says, that Mack

has explored through

and holotropic breathing

techniques. He uses the lat-

er to attain a malleable state.

During one session, he had a

past-life experience in which

he was a sixteenth-century

Russian who had to watch

while a band of Mongols de-

capitated his four-year-old

son. "It was awful."

—ROBERT S. BOWMAN

## What to Expect If You Go: A Mack Primer

**The abductees:** Most begin at home or in cars. You are floated to the ship on a beam of false light, passing through walls and other solid objects. Abductees and their crew commonly "travel" in "other" worlds; species are human.

**The experience:** Usually amnestic, spiritual, individualistic, who claim against social constraints and are flexible in accepting diverse or unusual experiences. Abduction runs in families; you are more likely to be taken if your parents or siblings have been.

**The aliens:** Physically small, hairless gray figures. Don't fear their talk, with soft mouths and huge, appendage-like eyes. They have no ears or external genitalia, although the abductees can retain their sex. All communication is conducted telepathically. Any similarity to extraterrestrials discussed in *the Weekly World News* is entirely coincidental.

**How to dress:** Bring along your short-sleeved undershirt. When

it comes to abductees, clothes will tell the aliens where, when, where, where.

**One you're there:** They will probe your reproductive system, take sperm samples or remove eggs, even ovaries. You may be "tagged" for later retrieval.

**Getting back:** After merely about three hours, alien-made vehicles, and you might be returned to a stretch of outer darkness from your home. It's not uncommon to wake up in bed with your head during the screening, direction, and your performance (or lack thereof) or favorite past.

**What you get:** Insights, for free. Sometimes just for fun, sometimes you don't. **After your experience:** You'll be tired, and you may feel cold, cold or energized. Identical to the state, one or another. Other symptoms are stress, panic, very-gone complaisance, and persistent gastrointestinal problems. All this, and no losing T-shirt.

In forty years of psychiatry

Since then, Mack has developed his skills to working with abductees, dozens of whose case studies are in *Abduction: Human Encounters with Aliens*. Along with those, our next month from Schubert. Although Mack has not been abducted himself, he believes that a few million Americans may have been. Some retain vague memories of their abductions, but most of Mack's data comes from lengthy hypnotic regressions during which abductees recall their experiences in vivid, sometimes terrifying, detail. Political correctness has reached utopia, and impersonation has replaced abductee as the term of choice. Aliens are still called aliens.

To buy into Mack's hypothesis requires believing in the validity of transmutive memory, the vagueness and controversial psychiatric theory that has been used to prosecute us child-abuse cases (see "The Lost Daughters," page 78). "People under hypnosis simply do not fabricate entire stories. Details, yes, but not entire stories," Mack insists.

As for the abduction stories, they are, as Johnny Carson might say, wild stuff. One experimenter recalls seeing a human-foot kangaroo that turned out to be a small



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## ARTISTS

# Genius in Fishnets

ALTHOUGH HE was England's finest painter since Turner, Francis Bacon has been known there as much for his notorious personal life (lived "between the gutter and the Rim"), his preference for rough trade, and his habit of wearing fishnet stockings and garters beneath his trousers as for the horrific beauty of his art. Bloody crucifixions, severed male corpus visuarii, pulled skin, rabbles pulled from the rabbles during the Blitz. Most infamously, he gave up the democratic bohemia of the Colony Room, the unofficial clubhouse of the London School, where Bacon assumed a friend, "the felons are a terrible success."

Bacon, who died in 1992 at eighty-two, has found his

Boswell in longtime friend David Dawson, self-confessed failed TV personality who in *The Gilded Game: Life of Francis Bacon* (out this month from Pantheon) gives us the apprentice Bacon, untrained but exacting, destroying hundreds of his own works. Bacon still living with his former nanny, who sleeps on his kitchen table and supported them both by shoplifting Bacon's sumo-sized corpses pulled from the rubble during the Blitz. Most infamously, he gave up the democratic bohemia of the Colony Room, the unofficial clubhouse of the London School, where Bacon assumed a friend, "the felons are a terrible success."

In this disarmingly hon-



Francis Bacon: Self-portrait (1970) of a self-willed master.

est, anecdotal romp through the artist's life, Dawson captures the essential quality of Bacon's painting—as red. The red of gore, the red of screaming mouths, of faces—cancer, but most of all, the red of the spiritual vanity of a man who depicted crucifixions that seemed to offer beauty but no hope of salvation, who spent his dying to convey "the violence of the rose."

# Art, Anyone?

HIDDEN SO WELL for so long, the sensitive, introspective side of John McElroy has now emerged. The tennis star, who, it turns out, has very quietly been collecting art since he was twenty, has just opened the



Playing in the gallery: McElroy introduces the intense world of Uruguayan-American artist Bruno Fonsca.



John McElroy Gallery in New York's SoHo. His first show, of anterior nudes by Bruno Fonsca, is to be followed by four or five more this year. For the time being, the gallery is open only by appointment (212-229-6260).

McElroy is refreshingly modest about his aspirations. "I'm still learning the business," he says. "I just hope not to lose money." His primary interest in art, he says, is in building a great collection of his own, and while his tastes range from Basquiat to DeChirico and late Philip Guston, he also wants eventually to discover new young artists for the gallery.

McElroy credits a friend, artist Eric Fischl, with helping to guide his taste, and he's swapping Fischl's tennis lessons for drawing lessons. "Right now he's a better tennis player than I am a drawer," McElroy says, "but I hope to change that." His favorite object master? "Naked women," he

# The Diary

What matters most: who reads it.

**N**OBODY HAS HAD ANTHING good to say about Senator Bob Packwood's diary—not even Packwood, who worried that it contained enough sexual filth about the Senate's most august members that they'd be named if it were ever made public. Squashed as Packwood makes himself and his diary sound, I do admire him. Keeping a diary requires enormous self-discipline. It also takes a certain amount of daring, especially if the diary is candid, because there is always the chance that as commoners we'll eventually come to light.

The first was the fate of England's foremost diarist, Samuel Pepys, who kept a journal from 1660 to 1669. It contains colorful firsthand accounts of the coronation of Charles II, the plague of 1665, and the great London fire of 1666. Pepys wrote all of it in a secretive shorthand because his descriptions of public events were inscribed with immensely personal observations—his urge to urinate during the king's audience, his hangover the morning after, the lice on his head, and his numerous adulterous trysts, like one that occurred in church: "[H]e stood by a pews, reader read, while I did labour to seize by the hand and the body, but . . . I could perceive he should soon be out of his pocket to prick me if I should touch her again—which strong did for bear." When he was triumphant in these sexual encounters, Pepys took the extra precaution of describing the scene with foreign words: "Then what je voudras avec her, both devane and backward, which is also may hon plaisir."

On the whole, the odd thing about diaries is that so many of their authors never seem to reveal what they've written. Poppish scholars say there is some evidence that Pepys ever bothered to write. The British diplomat Sir Harold Nicolson admitted that he rarely perused his diaries—wordy diary, and then only to check a name or a date. Lord Byron declared he couldn't bear to look at such fat because he found it contained numerous contradictions.

For such people, apparently, the act of writing a diary is enough. H. L. Mencken probably never read his, at least not the parts that contained raunch and anti-Semitic remarks ("hassheads," "kikes"). His adventures were deeply shocked when the diaries were published in 1939, and the result was a puerile denunciation of Mencken's

intellectual standing. The widow of Nathaniel Hawthorne made sure nothing like that would happen to her husband, the bowdlerized diary, deleting words like booz and crumpet. And she dealt with that suggestive word *shit* by changing "I got into bed" to "I composed myself to sleep."

Many diarists make it clear that they expect their words to be published as written. Noting that he had not entered anything in his diary for three months, Noel Coward penned the following in 1939: "I can only suggest in any wrench future biographer that he gets my daily engagement book and from that lists in anything he can find and good luck to him, poor bioggs." Richard Nixon, who popped his manners with self-servingly arrogant of incorporation, did the same while dictating his diaries. One surprising entry blames Martha Mitchell for Watergate. Nixon apparently assumed that Mitchell's messy notes disturbed her husband, Attorney General John Mitchell (his campaign manager), who then again either masterminded the break-in or allowed it to happen.

**S**OME DIARISTS, especially those written by assassins, are designed not only to be read by others but to shake the world to its foundations. While he lived in Russia, Lee Harvey Oswald composed a journal entitled "Hiroshima Diary." (There's nothing in it about killing Kennedy, however.) Arthur Bremer, the man who shot Governor George Wallace, went so far as to write "© copyright 1972 Arthur H. Bremer" in his diary, and when *Newsweek*'s later published excerpts, the magazine included a shaded list line. Bremer had originally asked Nixon, noting in his diary that the danger gave him an erection, and postponed: "This will be one of the most closely read pages since the Scrolls in these cases." Bremer stopped the *one* Dear Diary subsection. On May 8, 1972, he wrote, "Hey world! Come here! I wanna talk to you!" Nine days later, he shot Wallace.

Whenever the chancery of diaries, they are the most lifelike form of literature—more realistic than novels, histories, or plays. They capture the shock of unfolding events (Mary Shelley wrote on March 5, 1815: "Read Cora and saw my baby"). On March 6: "Read my baby dead." They highlight life's frequent juxtaposition of the epochal and the mundane (Fiona Tolka, August 1, 1962: "Germany has declared war on Russia—Swimming in the afternoon"); and they record the bizarrely unmentionable too (Evelyn Whinigh, June 26, 1962: "I did, I think, nothing").

But for all the noteworthiness they contain, I suspect most diaries—Senator Packwood's included—are of less urgent general interest than their authors assume. I think of the character in Ingmar Bergman's *Scenes from a Marriage* who takes out her diary and reads her husband a passage that has profound emotional significance for her. When she's finished, she looks up and finds he's fallen fast asleep.



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# Bill Wears the Pants

But, when necessary, Hillary can sure take him to the cleaners

**I**T WAS LONG after midnight, and the light from a single gooseneck table lamp cast eerie shadows in the Lincoln sitting room. The President, dressed in his white terry-cloth Arkansas Razorbacks robe, sat motionless in an armchair, a hardback mystery novel lying closed on his lap. "What the hell am I going to do?" the President mumbled to himself. "What am I going to do?"

Footsteps in the corridor broke his reverie. The First Lady, wearing a pink, fluffy robe, appeared in the doorway. Seeing her in the half-light with her hair pulled back gleefully he couldn't help but remember—Yale, Fayetteville, Little Rock, all those dark evenings when Hillary appeared before him as a answer. "I saw your light," she said simply. "ough tugh," he replied. She walked behind his chair and gently massaged his neck. "It's Aspin, isn't it?" she asked. The President softly nodded. "Bill, you're simply going to fire him," she announced in her take-no-prisoners voice. "There's no other choice."

The President groaned. "I can't do that," he said. "Let's give up his House seat. His heart isn't strong. I will have nightmares about *Lim Guarni*." Hillary took a deep breath and then launched: "Bill, cut this chattering. What's he's what you've got to do? Get Mark to put together a list of candidates for the Pentagon immediately. Somebody safe, James Woolsey or Sam Nunn, even Bobby Ray Inman, when the generals love, he'd be perfect. Chop off Aspin's head so fast he won't feel the blade. Let's work, he'll go get me."

For the first time in hours, the President allowed himself a half-smile. She is so certain, so smart, so strong. If you say no, Hillary I don't know how I could do that job without you."

**I**F ONCE WHITE HOUSE REPORTING were half as fulfilling as the aesthetic joys of sheer invention. The power dynamic upstairs at the White House is likely not quite this pulpy. But this scene is a needless illustration of the central mystery of the Clinton administration: the weird relationship between the President and the First Lady.

The epic grammatical shift that created the nation's first two-career White House makes poor first ladies seem as pampered as a Dear Abby letter on hairy penning. But, while

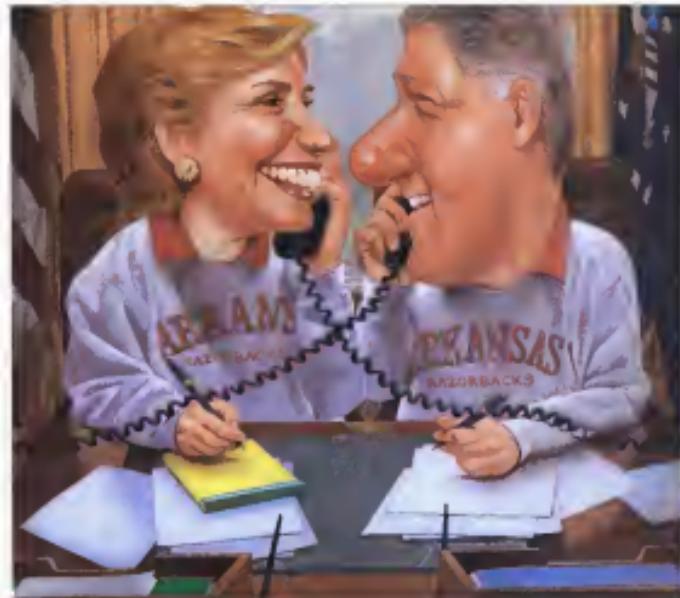
the Clinton working partnership may be official, it remains a sensitive enough topic to be wrapped in the guise of spa council. Hillary and Bill's emotions are guarded more carefully than nuclear secrets. So, when does the President end and the First Lady begin? Where do the Clintons draw the line between private life and public duty? And could anything like the late-night drama that I imagined have actually happened?

As for poor Aspin, Chief of Staff McLarty reveals that Hillary was among the advisers apprised of his temporary exile to the presser annex in advance. Those close to Mrs. Clinton have developed a method for gauging her involvement in these types of presidential decisions. If she intones something in passing, without embellishing it with a comment, her role was probably minimal. The more volatile Mrs. Clinton becomes, the more likely her fingerprints were on the decision. Aspin's fate prompted barely an utterance.

Since becoming enmeshed in the White House, the First Relationship has become far subtler than the two-for-the-prize-of-one hacking away of the campaign. Right after the election, both the President and Mrs. Clinton decided that another national road map constitutional principle would take over: the more limited experience with power sharing. A condition of the President's taxes off the nation: "It doesn't take a brain surgeon," he says, "to know that there are political constraints on her." The sweeping manager-without-portfolio role that Hillary played in the campaign fit the fluid nature of presidential politics, any attempt to replicate it within the formal structure of the White House would be as chaotic as rush hour in Rome.

Occasional appearances and Rudi Lubitsch notwithstanding, longer the correspondence Clinton and/or offer an evidence that on a day-to-day basis, the President relies as much on other advisers such as Al Gore and Oxford room-mate-turned-State Department negotiator Strobe Talbott. True, during a typical day the Clintons visit several times by phone—two rounds, bursts of information-sharing. "You never guess when I need it," it's clear. For the most part, the President and Hillary occupy separate orbits. Even Mark McLarty admits that he sees her only once or twice a week in meetings.

Beyond her role as the canina of health care, Hillary's influence, while potentially vast, is carefully shielded and modulated. An old-fashioned cold-war analogy holds: because everyone knows that she has the bomb, she never has to threaten to use it. Complicating the calculus is the inevitable blurring of personal and professional: there are moments when the President needs a helper for more than another adviser with a Yale Law degree. Maggie Williams, the First Lady's chief of staff, offers this political-wife power protocol for the Nancies: "A good wife," she says, "won't always advise." Excess unpaid senior adviser, take note.



**H**ILLARY CLINTON is keenly aware that virtually everything she does sits a president. The political ramifications are obvious, and the President's handlers monitor her approval ratings with the accuracy of card counters in a Vegas casino. "Really because of her years in Little Rock," says Jon Perry, deputy White House director of personnel and a Westley classmate of the First Lady. "Hillary knows how to cloak her role in a way that doesn't annoy constituents—particularly among other women."

In public settings with the President in the White House, Mrs. Clinton strives to lessen the chance that she is just another senior adviser—David Gergen in drag. During recent marathon health-care policy meetings in the Cabinet Room, a domestic policy adviser Carol Basson puts it: "The only way you'd know they were husband and wife is that periodically the President would say to her, 'Do you remember when we were campaigning and we saw it?'" This mock formality seems like a TV sitcom about a working couple with a secret marriage. At times, the Clintons play off each other in meetings, Hillary pressing a line of questioning in search of more cordial answers than a grumbly-sounding response. Good cop, bad cop. "He defers to her during

the debate," explains a top White House policymaker, and she yields to him when it's time to make a decision.

To the know-it-all parents and does the groundquake when the Tina Couple didn't? "Actually," considers a close friend of Mrs. Clinton's, "the more we watch our in when they agree—and they're both past." In truth, the Clintons appear to trust all policy decisions like a sigma average. The President wins. "We certainly been in the room when they're disagreed," says Basson. "There's an fake politeness. They just try to find their way out of their differences." Deputy Treasury Secretary Roger Altman recalls that when the Clintons debate points of the health care plan, it's "an if you, Lloyd Bentsen and George Stephanopoulos were talking to each other." During the campaign, NAFTA was a point of particular contention between the Clintons, with Hillary worrying about the political impact of domestic job loss. Hard to imagine Barbara Bush brooding over domestic job loss (is fiscal items coach, perhaps?). But for Mrs. Clinton it was all part of her much-busier job description.

The Presidents checksum Hillary as their most commanding in any White House, a math teacher. "He needs her," says a senior adviser. "It's uncomfortable if she isn't around for a de-

## IT SLEEPS ALONE



A FRUGAL AND ANONYMOUS SCOT LONG YEARS AGO, observed that the cask casks which had been used for bringing sherry, port, or madeira into the country, might be employed thereafter to mature malts.

A PRIME NOTION IT TURNED OUT TO BE. The casks (particularly those that had contained sherry) reared both a luscious golden colour and a beguiling hint of resilience to the taste.

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## OUR MAN IN THE WHITE HOUSE

cision, even when he doesn't agree with her." In presidential shorthand, "Clear that with Hillary" means he wants her opinion, not necessarily her assent. At times, though, the President can become complicit with Hillary's lawlessness: her over-the-top intensity and her innate belief that every cause is a dangerous diversion from her health-care crusade. Shortly after the NAFTA vote, the First Lady, in a poignant moment of exasperation, growled, confiding to an old friend on the back nine, "Sometimes Hillary gets too hysterical on health care."

In this sphere of influence, the Clintons also divide their responsibilities so that the President's foreign policy and Hillary runs their social life. (Judging from the record so far, she has the better deal.) The result, explains a close friend of the President's, is that Hillary "has a large degree of control over the people who surround her." She devotes and outshines the informal forty-person dinner-and-dance parties that are the staple of their social life. The President and Mrs. Clinton are isolated by their own bi-rhythms. He lingers with guests until well after midnight, while she vanishes at the stroke of eleven to sleep and reflect.

The First Lady has always been a point of self-control, even during the dark days of the Clinton marriage in Arkansas, the never-lit anger spilt over into policy discussions on educational reform (the model for her current policy assignment). As a couple, the Clintons carry more baggage than a 1940s movie starlet who just got off the Trans-Canada Express. When the December allegations about the President's gambling case surfaces in Arkansas but the White House like the Nightclub before Chezneau, Hillary knows what to do. (As in the campaign, Hillary is much better suited than the President at dispensing with politeness and going for the jugular.) And the wire-service interview in which she insisted the "unprompted" White House contretemps was demonstrated her working role most clearly: tough counsel to her chief husband. But in one of Hillary's friends said, "I don't know how many more times she can do this."

(What, then, are we to make of the *American Spectre's* super-duper man-trapper-snooper story? The story was filled with enough damnable to justify

carting it off with a man-trapper pooper-snooper? That said, it is remarkable that during periods of the 1980s, when it came to women, Clinton followed the maxim of George Washington Plunkett: "We seen my opportunities, and I took 'em.")

Does the resurrection of these charges cast a pall over the Clinton marriage? At the White House staff Christmas party, the President, alluding to the *American Spectre* and to Jim Perrey, "Tim really used to it. But I used to be for Hillary. She shouldn't have to go through it again."

And has Whitewater been a source of censure between them? There are hints that the President wanted to invest with the McDougal's earlier than 1991 and that his cautious, lawyerly wife held back. As it turned out, their Little Rock friends made money, but the Clintons were skinned to the last invention in a Ponzi scheme. Does this possible discord explain some of the anguish that have made Whitewater look like whitewash? When the private and public blur, it is extraordinarily difficult to understand the daily news without playing possum marriage counselor.

In the coming health care debate, we should all be aware that we are an enmeshed nation. What happens when the President and Mrs. Clinton have to cut deals with Congress on the plan? Will the First Lady prove an adept negotiator ("She's no professor of sociology," says Alinsky), or will she be too wedded to her own creation to compromise?

IT WAS LONG AFTER midnight, and the glow of the Lincoln sitting room illuminated the President reading a murder mystery, bemoaning "Everything's Coming Up Roses." The First Lady appeared in the doorway. "Everything okay?" she asked. "Great. A-OK. Absolutely perfect," he replied merrily. "I've decided to call Aspen. It's a no-brainer. I know just the guy for the Pentagon." Mrs. Clinton yawned, a profile in disinterest. "Whatever you think best, dear," she said. "You're the President. But please, no Bobby Ray frenzies."

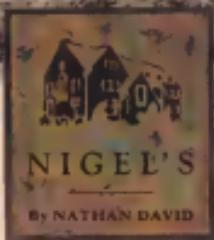
On second thought, maybe that's the way it happened. ■

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## LOST IN THE FUNHOUSE

Michael Hirschorn

# Being Me

A song of novelist Paul Watkins, or the new obsession with memoirizing the lightly lived life

**P**AUL WATKINS SEEMS just to have emerged from a volcano. We're nibbling away at our respective afternoon snacks at Princeton's P.J.'s Pancake House, a local landmark bent on retaining a minimalist aura of collegiate idyll. Watkins, who teaches at two nearby prep schools, tops at a suggestive agglomeration of sentence—"just like in England," he says with disgust and fondness—and habitually tries to explain why he wrote *Send Before Your God*, a memoir of life as an American at England's Dragon and Eton prep schools.

Watkins is deeply uncomfortable at discussing his life. He'd rather be writing, something he does with Randy vigor and dedication. As though, Watkins has already bulletined through four well-reviewed novels and now, even before the peach fuzz is off, is exploring. What It Means to Be Paul Watkins In England the book was subtitled "The Making of a Young Writer," which led to a measure of scorn at what Watkins in self-aggrandized diction calls his "cheekiness." Cheeky monkey.

"I am angry, every now and again, you know, coming up for an sort of thing," he says without condescension, "being able to answer difficult questions."

Watkins is only the latest in a recent slew of men and women who decided before age thirty-five to skip the living room and head straight into memoir. Not counting dozens of shoddy veiled auto-biographies (Tolson), these ve-

been auto-biographies from Terry Teachout, Lorrie Cary, John Larro, Tim McLean, Chesa Cofield, and Robert Novak—just, among others. I know of at least three more on the way, and in May a collection called *New Young American Writers* on the New Generation will offer a smooch writer chorus of self-love, self-hate, and self-care.

These young memoirists tend to fall into two camps: the marginalized ethnic or yoked who successfully assimilate into the mainstream culture by surviving the rigors of a WASPy prep school or college, and the poised whose colorful backwater adventures prove that poor white southerners have a soul, too (McLean's *Keeper of the Moon* being a wonderful example of that type).

Teachout's *City Living Memoir* of a Small-Town Boy, published in 1992, may be paradigmatic of both genres, and especially their weaknesses. Undeniably dull ("The fall of 1952 is much a part of me as the fall of 1992"), uninterestingly hilarious, Teachout seeks (and does not find) window in the offing details of an unremarkable Missouri childhood. No matter. He, like many other memoirists, is in response to the sheer ontological brilliance—the biographical magnum—of *Being Me*. That is why Watkins can write that "nothing noteworthy seems ever to have happened to [himself] before going on about the town for much of the next 80 pages in itself to himself, everything seems Rebellion. But in Rabelais, swelling steadily higher, Teachout grows up to become an editorial writer for the *New York Daily News*.

Less in self-love and much more eloquent are Cary and Larro, both black, who unlike Teachout grew up to work for *Time* magazine. Their books—like Novak's account of being Japanese at Harvard, *A Dark Shade of Crimson*—are entrancing tales of assimilation. Clinging to the margins—which is, after all, where the moral high ground and literary honor reside—they cluster toward the mainstream.

This seems to be the generalized story: coping as vis-



Seen like old times: Watkins, standing outside his home, doesn't mean recently old literary forms as much as

ASHKAR BAHRI

## LOST IN THE FUNHOUSE

very lacking was a major economic upturn, or a galvanizing political event, the young novelist searches for restoring against a backdrop of economic and social stasis and the core forbidding mystery of life. That's the lesson of *Carly's* profoundly conservative St. Paul's School teacher, Black lot, how to find the grace and meaning in the humble task of getting your shirt.

**I** N HIS OWN ARKLO-HARROW way, Watkins is also defiantly blind out on the margins, both as an American child in England and as a misanthrope among misfits. He may be well fit of the power New-York literary circuit, but he has put his ambitions to good use. *Among Us* is to already a legend, viewed variously with awe, jealousy, and condescension. That he is considered something of a sex god by his groupies is an impression he must live down, but it's also not something he seems eager to hide. Sensitive, brooding—having—he starts out from the corner of St. Paul's Year-Old like a shriveled Raymon well shot, one half at darkness, half in light, his eyeballs shadowed mysteriously by a knowing shadow (just the *Anatomy of Inhibition*, just off camera left?). Watkins is literary ingénue in full grasp of molecular sex.

Then there is the mythology the audience has never written at sixteen (from the point of view of a Nutty), the legendary stuffiness incident in Yale, the summer with Jennifer Beals in Mexico, his glamorous wife, his go-go brother, the famous experiences and personal directory, the ironicalness of his historical research, the legendary work habits ("Don't know of anyone like him who's a better writer," says his writer friend Paul Gruber), the hours of writing and revising, punctuated by bouts of the *Sedentary* (or in a rowing machine) and finally the *Personae*.

"He is so self-made," says the writer Dorothy Steinke when I ask her to explain how Watkins manages such else in a decrepit world. "He has that complete persona that he has worked really hard to create," she adds. "You have to see it at all."

Speaking with and reading Watkins is an experience in time travel. He simply refuses to acknowledge the passing of the age of innocence, the rise and fall of modernism, the sever of de-

constructionism, the assumption of relativism, or popular nature of my sex (not even *Marty* "lymph").

"He is out of the century," his friend, the writer Robert Olmsted, says fondly. "Not this one, the last one."

At Yale, Watkins bridled at the gall of professors like Harold Bloom, whose assault on the foundations of writing he correctly saw as a power grab by mere critics (like me)—not critics. "There's that great sadness by academics for the sort of blue-collar writer type," Watkins says, "who actually put the books together."

Not looking too blue-collar this sunny afternoon in a profusely dappled-gray suit, crisp white Oxford shirt, and four-in-hand, a forehead crease resting firmly over his left eyebrow, Watkins might have just emerged from a chat with Ford Madox Ford about the *Anti-Borghese* empire.

For all his talk to madmen, Watkins would like readers to see his memoir of the Dragon and Eagle schools as a true dissertation of a system that has outlived its usefulness. "It was breaking theanks," he says of his book, sounding the siren resonance of art. But one will be hard pressed to leave the orange from this chapter, at pages gone first, unmoved.

What weight you'll find in this memoir, as in Watkins's fiction, devolves from his relationship with his father. A brilliant but not especially wealthy scientist who wanted his son to be part of the British upper class, Watkins's Senior sent Paul off to prep school at age seven and then died when Paul was a teenager and half a world away. Stand up, at least, a representative rumination on lost paternity.

Watkins seems like, which is why he makes clear to me that he had no intention of placing American realists by squatting above Dragon and Eagle's British overlords. "I think, first of all, of *Remainder*," he says. "The judgment [about elite British schools] was so in place before the book was even written that they were unable to see that the book didn't deal with the sexual passing of judgment."

But what is most striking about the book is the way the bearings, sexual harassment, pugnacious homosexuality, suspicion of outsiders and pranks fit so comfortably into the mold of

how we think (if we ever still do) about that world. Even in 1993, Robert Graves's *Goodbye is All That* was able to use the schools as mostly whipping posts for his mockery of British snobbery, where students are subjected to "fourteen years at Latin and Greek, not even comprehensively taught." Watkins rarely approaches Gravesian levels of dread and lashing, but no dare risk his carefully cultivated sense of self.

Nor are the obligatory schoolboy sex scenes as good as Graves's. Graves gave us a love triangle; Watkins takes out his Swiss Army knife. [He] pressed her against the wall, "he writes of a would-be boyfriend, "and held the blade against the hollow of his throat." That's certainly an interesting scenario: Is that homosexual panic, soldier-on-crucifix, or the budding of a necessary bratty? The reader looks for more light here, but the scene fizzles out: "Things would be different from now on between him and me," he concludes. No kidding.

In his novels—which are enchanting, deliriously pleasurable Kenneth Tynan-like adventures movies—the heroes answer a preordained call. In *The French of Light*, young Ben is forced to give his "beloved" a steely-blood transfusion, which ends up killing the old guy. It turns out, he's not Ben Jagger, which is why he also is toilously little dithering for Ben to return to the Ireland of his ancestors to find his marching-blood type, and amid an eye-catching display of bleeding and mayhem, he... well, you can guess.

There is something comforting in the way Watkins returns to old literary haunts, he doesn't so much rewrite them as re-inhabit them, spacing here, dawdling there, polishing the dull silver to a like but brighter burnish. One wants to dislike the plodding re-tread of the *Threepenny*, the blant character sketching, the unequivocal repetition of literature's century-long experiment with new modes of expression (Joyce, Nabokov), but Watkins insists on his right to write. And we must yield, because as with that other master of retelling, Ralph Lauren, Watkins wears like a well-worn polo shirt. We have to see it as real.



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FROM NEXT DOOR

THE MOVED

I LOVED MY

FRENCH TEACHER

SHE GOT MARRIED

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## THE SPORTING LIFE

Mike Lupica

# Eyes on the Prize

Why Charlie Ward should stiff-arm the glamour of the NBA and rescue the NFL from its kicking game

THE LAST TIME he touched the ball on a college-football Saturday, in an ancient movie set called the Orange Bowl, Charlie Ward did what college-football heroes are supposed to do. He took his team down the field and won the national championship the way he had won the Heisman Trophy. He completed the last of his twenty-four passes for the last of his nearly three thousand passing yards and left Florida State a short field-goal field victory.

Even on a night when he was not spectacular, he was great when it counted—in the final minute of the season. He could have finished with a touchdown pass—that would have been the real movie ending—but a Nebraska defender crimped his receiver. A frustrated kicker capped the drive, and Ward was done with football for the year, maybe for good.

"People are talking about one playing in Super Bowls," he said. "But they are a lot more likely to see me in the NBA finals."

It would be a terrible waste.

He is a star quarterback and a star point guard, the most exciting player to come out of college in years. The National Football League needs that right now. Ward says that his dream is to be selected in the first round of both the NFL and the NBA drafts, a historic sports double. By the time that happens, the agents will have made their pitches, the sneaker companies will be in on it, and there is a chance that Ward, who hardly ever makes the wrong decision with a ball—say ball—in his hands, could pick the wrong sport.

He should play football.

He should bring all of his point-guard creativity to at least one NFL team, let some coach build a fast-break

offense around him as they did at Florida State. Ward is at his best on a football field. He proved that when he won a long-distance cover. The Heisman people let him know what they thought when it was time to vote. The final count was like Nixon against McGovern.

Ward can pass, he can run, he can pass on the run. He thinks he improves. He is fearless. He reminds me of Joe Montana—the one I remember from Notre Dame in the big games. He runs around and throws the ball and great things always happen.

In his last two years at Florida State, Ward lost only two football games. He completed nearly one percent of his passes for three thousand yards and twenty-seven touchdowns. He rushed for almost four thousand yards.

He comes along at a time when most pro-football games are decided by field-goal kickers—the size of Ken and Barry. The NFL is drowning in kickers, and Charlie Ward is a life preserver. If the league lets him go away, every owner and general manager should be sentenced to a lifetime of watching little Tim boot enough field goals so that he can beat little Scampy's.

By a score of 9-8



GO or not GO:  
Entrepreneurial  
Matt McGovern  
outdoes his  
opponents

ON THE NIGHT CHARLIE WARD won the Heisman Trophy, Florida State's basketball team lost to a school called South Florida. It would not have happened if he had been at point guard. Going into this season, the Seminoles were going in games Ward started. There are questions about his jump shot, but Ward has everything else: the ball-handling, the quickness, the passing, the shooting. He has led the Atlantic Coast Conference in steals. As much as coach Pat Kennedy loves to have him at point guard, though, he believes Ward is a better quarterback.



## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Stanley Bing

# Are You a World-Class Liar?

Take this easy quiz and see whether you make the grade!

**H**OW MANY LIES do you tell in a day? I don't tell that many. Actually, that's not completely true. Actually, I lie constantly, like a ring, from the time first thing in the morning when I say, "Good morning, dad, you look great!" (when I don't), and he doesn't) to the last newscast of the ten-hour shift, when I tell **Blaine**, our midwestern vice-president, that his position in the corporation is "extremely visible in this juncture," when I know for a fact he'll be gone by the time the cacaos are on bloom.

I don't always like to lie, but at times it's got to be done. And actually, when you get right down to it, the dad you and I develop is telling lies consciously as needed, is directly proportional to our success and very much in keeping with the times, too. That's how I look at it, really. See how many times I've said actually so far? People who he all the time say actually is lies, and "I'll be honest with you" and so on. Well, the truth is... "Did you ever never never?" Know why? I don't. I don't. Maybe I do. Pick one.

(b) They believe that that "truthful" source establishes a benchmark of credibility when before they spoke deservedly had none. (c) They want you to do something for them. (d) The next thing they say will be a lie. (d) They're pretty much honest and they want you to know about it. Frankly, I think that's terrible.

Which answer did you choose? Go ahead, be honest. There is no right or wrong answer. You believe that? Hat. There is always a right and a wrong answer. In this case, the right answer is (d).

There! You've taken the first baby step on the most important quest of your lifetime. Ready to go ahead? Well, go, going anyhow you lying, cenging, maculagous lump of wisdom! Just leading! Let's start with the easy stuff.

Multiple choice (c) possibly!

How many times did you do during this last eight working hours? (a) Once or twice. So what? (b) I don't lie, really. I just put a little sheen on things now and then. (c) An alien as you are, every (d) None.

Doesn't you feeling right now? (a) Great! (b) I feel a little studied up. (c) I don't know. (d) I lied, the way you do. Many

**Isn't you smart?** (a) Great! (b) Hanging in there. Why? Is something wrong with it? (c) I feel a little sheep but I don't want to overdo it. (d) I'll either have yours, man. Who does a for you?

**I think people are normal when they ...** (a) Show up for what's expected without calling attention to themselves. (c) Lie, manipulate, grab for the gold when they get close to it. (d) Roman rule is so discriminatory! Is that what you mean?

**What are you just doing this evening?** (a) Going home to be with my loving, devoted family, having a nice dinner, playing with the wife, and falling asleep during *Lawrence*, even though he's got about the funniest darned guy on TV, ever. (b) Working in my office with a dry turkey sandwich and a box of decaffeinated tea. (c) Having my BMW de-timed. (d) I had planned to go to a hockey game with the girls from *American Gladiators* but I'd much rather go over the 1994-95 strategic plan with you, dad! You're a party just waitin' to happen!

**Tonight you had a meeting with the controller about the revenue you expect to produce during the second quarter. The game has a maker that's about 15 percent lower than the one you have in "true."** Why did you lie? (a) Lie! Hey! That's my story and I'm stickin' to it! (b) Everybody in these meetings is lying too, so those lies don't count. Also, everybody is expecting everybody else to be in that context and would be confused if they didn't, so that's not really lying, either. Frankly, you know even if we didn't lie about it, the controller would still bump our number, like he always does, and then we'd



PATRICK MURDOCK

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plan. "It really  
drew up preferences,  
helping people  
about it."

Esquire

*The casting of Tom Cruise as the lead in the \$70-million movie *Interview with the Vampire* has set off a classic Hollywood ego brawl. Anne Rice is squalling. David Geffen is fuming. And Neil Jordan is just confused. Meanwhile, the star is left asking: Why does everybody hate me?* By Jennet Conant

# Lestat, C'est Moi

**I**T ACTUALLY WAS a dark and stormy night. Angry thunderheads cloaked Houston's Hobby International Airport, and flash-flood warnings were being broadcast on the radio. The forecast was far as much as ten inches of rain before the end of the day. As the limousine plowed through the downpour, the passengers recall, the water was rising almost midway on the door panels. The driver turned and asked Anne Rice if she had brought the foul weather with her. Rice—the author of *Interview with the Vampire* and a half-dozen best-selling novels about the despicable doings of witches, ghouls, and other unearthly creatures in a whole series of dark and stormy nights—could only smile. Lately, she has been accused of greater mischief than mucking with the heavens.

Looking like a unified Morticia Addams, Rice was in Texas to promote her latest best-seller, *Lester*, at Houston's Crossroads Market for Booksellers. As her name approached, a low murmur could be heard in the distance. At first it sounded like thunder. By the time the car sounded the last boom, though, Rice could clearly make out the rhythmic stomp of cheering. Gathered outside the bookstore, nearly a thousand soldiers grinning, costumed in ghoulish and garish bags, brandishing umbrellas and protest signs, were reviving the same story at the top of their lungs: "No Tom Cruise! No Tom Cruise! No Tom Cruise!" As she stepped out of the car, a young man handed her a petition with hundreds of signatures calling for a boycott of the movie version of *Interview with the Vampire*, which stars Cruise as Rock's most infamous ghoul, the vampire *Lester*.

Those unfamiliar with Rice may justifiably wonder why her public appearances call forth mobs of frenzied hoppers and punks sporting black leather, Mohawks, tattoos, and nose rings. Those who do tip into the *Roman* process, which is of a style that can be described only as bizarre, may also wonder what all the fuss is about. The cast takes many risks, and Rice's followers feel they own the vampire *Lester*, no matter who paid for the film rights.

The true power of vampire literature, Rice has said, lies in "the hideously well of metaphor." *Devotion* used to read into her books about anything they are looking for: it is seduction, immortality, a secret society, or homosexuality. The more opaque the imagery, the wider the appeal.

*Devotion*, published in 1990, is about as opaque as it gets, and perhaps as a result is considered the greatest vampire novel to come along since Bram Stoker's *Dracula* was published almost a hundred years ago. Updated for a morally ambiguous age, Rice's *Lester* is no longer the vampires as evil incarnate; he is burdened with a conscience that haunts him every waking hour. (The victims may or may not be glad to know that another has read his *Conscience*.)

Countess Franca Forli Coppola was so influenced by Rice's *Lester* that in his capacity as *Dracula*, he transformed Stoker's bloodsucker into a lonely, melancholy, as much in search of redemption as of revenge. Thanks to Rice, the modern vampire has gone from scuttling to macabre to stoned, and, really, aren't we all?

Spurred on by her readers, Rice has embarked on a one-woman crusade to embarras Tom Cruise. Warner Brothers, the studio bankrolling the film, and David Geffen, the film's producer. To cheering crowds, Rice has been convincing Cruise for butchering her script, sensing the sexual content as accommodate his closest stage, and perpetrating the worst crime in the name of casting *Unto the Sins of the Vampires*: Addressing an audience of one thousand at Holloween night, she said, "I wanted to call David Geffen and say 'How the hell could you do this?'"



**GEFFEN:** "For *Clan* Rice to attack this movie when she has been paid \$2 million is just capricious. It lacks kindness. It lacks discretion. And it lacks professionalism."

such into every man's mouth, and child it into."

Cruise denies he isn't worried about whether the Whistler-best stage will interfere with his ability to play *Lester*. "I just couldn't envision the role," he says in the easy, offhanded way he might talk about having a second piece of cake. Speaking over the phone from his home in Los Angeles, where he is resting for a day before flying to London, Cruise is courteous and charming. While he concedes that *Lester* represents a real departure, he prefers to see it as a risk than a challenge. "Bram's, he's not a bad guy, he just has villainous aspects to him," he deadgives. "From his point of view, he's right. He's really a lonely, lonely character."

If anything, *Lester* is a mess, a slightly superannuated who-went-to-the-beach-and-spent-the-day-on-the-beach tale. In its less-than-blithely terms *Lester*, played by Brad Pitt, is a vampire because he likes the company—and he digs *Lester's* fabulous pad. Later, still bored and lonely, *Lester* persuades *Louis* to "adopt" the five-year-old *Claudia*, making her a vampire as well. *Claudia* and *Louis*, who may be human and spend a lot of time napping, are actually the engine that drives the plot. *Lester* mostly stands around looking cool.

Geffen condemned Cruise in December 1993, while the star was vacationing in Asuncion with his wife, Nicole Kidman. Cruise says he "got very scared." He had heard that they were reading a movie of *Devotion*, which he had read as a teenager and loved. As a kid, he says, he had been a huge fan of the genre, staying up late with his three sisters to watch *Creature from the Black Lagoon* and *Fright Night*. "I was the second youngest," he says, "and I would always go to bed absolutely terrified."

**F**OR TOM CRUISE, *Interview* is running out to be a washed-up role. At only thirty-one, the pretentiously cool actor with the pale-pink smile seems too million-a-piece and delivers huge opening weekends. But by now that career-long star role he has played to perfection seems set to be wearing a little thin.

It's because a major rumour now runs: The cocky youth manager is now hothead over the course of a mystery-mystery movie (applepie and roll credits, please). The fire-with-wink, smile, and expression of wild fulfilment, it's all so familiar now. At the same time, all sorts of things can go haywire when star veneer beyond their bubbly bubbly persona runs that uncharmed territory known as "scratches." For Cruise, who until now could do no wrong—even *Coldplay* has a certain late-Beauregarde charm—the ratio is uneven.

But at the urging of two Hollywood powerhouses, CAA chief Mike Ovitz and David Geffen, Cruise is entering the dangerous realm of character derivation. The fact that millions of Rice's readers know the youngish *Lester* to be tall, blonde, European, and androgynous may be the least of his problems. In taking on the part, Cruise is playing a villain for the first time in his life—a fellow man murderer, no less, an after-hours fiend who sinks his teeth into every man's mouth, and child it into."

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From the moment he knew he had the part, he has been "haunting us," remaking Rice's vampire books and baring up on the decadent lifestyle of the eighteenth-century French aristocrat *Lester's* milieu before he went into the vampire game. Cruise spent time in restaurants in Paris and visited Versailles to get the feel of the period furniture and falloons. He went on a short-end-extreme regimen and dropped twelve pounds to take on *Lester's* part physique. His hair, which he now wears parted in the middle, is streaked blonde, and his eyebrows are flecked with gold. "I don't know how that movie will turn out," he says. "All I know is it is as cool as I am having a great time playing this character."

What he has not enjoyed during is defining himself against Rice's frequent and utilitarian slights. Rice has made a series of snide comments about everything from the actor's height ("too short") to his voice ("too high"), complaining a bit hubenically in the *Los Angeles Times* that Cruise is no match for her *Lester*. "She's Edward G. Robinson in *Rotten Tomatoes*," Cruise says, who in recent years has been carefully shielded from the press by his overprotective PR women, Pat Kinney—refusals for reporters to interview writers (justified, not included) to sign contracts before interviewing Cruise—was caught off-guard by Rice's wrath. "When I first got it, it really hurt my feelings; to be called about it," he admits, adding with genuine amazement, "she writes hurt."

Cruise didn't realize how much play Rice was getting until he started reading reviews from friends who wanted to know what was going on. "Nobody could see what the big deal was," recalls Cruise. With the support of people he trusts, Cruise is trying not to let it get him down. He still manages not being able to meet with Rice, the way he did with the writer *Rita Dove* before making *Barry* at the *Round of Poets*. "You don't usually start a movie with someone not wanting you to do it," he says, allowing himself to sound a bit frazzled for a second. "That's unusual."

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**L**IKE CRUISE, Warner Brothers is unimpressed by Geffen's campaign. In fact, some top executives at the studio would gladly drive a stake through her heart: "She's out there promoting her book and getting a lot of ink from all this," says Robert Friedman, president of publicity for Warner Brothers. "It's no accident *Lester* is back on the best-seller list after seventeen years. It's just good, old-fashioned kickassness."

Even Ovitz, who represents Cruise, was sufficiently disturbed to respond. Twisting the *Strega's* stick to his chest and the file had not done any damage. Once handed down an official-sounding line, "Interview will stand on its own intrinsic quality, which, given the talented people involved, will likely be very high."

While it is accurate in Hollywood that any publicity



**RICE:** "These people have stood in line three and four hours. They are my readers, and they hate this. I was carried along. I didn't start the whole thing at all."

is good publicity, there is growing concern that Warner Brothers' *Rise*'s rampage could bury the \$10 million movie even before it is completed. Even star Columbia Pictures joined with the *Los Angeles Times* over a negative article about *Los Angeles Host*, since executives have been dominated about advance word.

Although Geffen isn't scheduled to be inducted until fall, it has already become the sort of industry joke—labeled everything from "Gwen & Geffen Glitter" to "Ringo & Lee"—and of newspaper headlines predicting another bloated Hollywood bomb. More than seventeen years in the making, with a legacy of broken deals, bad scripts, and bizarre casting problems, *Interview* may just be joined Superstition's industry peers prior to the sudden death of *water* *River Phoenix* (see page 10), who was set to play the role of the young reporter, as an ominous harbinger.

For all of Cruise's efforts to play cool, there is no doubt that Rice's comments have created a major mentality. Since filming began last October, the paparazzi have been filled with unconfirmed reports about infatuation on the set, heated-up seminars, secret nannies, contrasting Cruise's dressing room to extreme locations, and other extraordinary efforts to protect the star from the press. The one press agent that has been as besieged with silly rumors that she has given up denying them.

With \$90 million at stake, and Cruise's golden career entrusted to his care, it is easy to understand why David Geffen is feeling a little cranky. Mainly at work after several years of haggling with Rice over her book, preparing uncountable scripts, and exhaustively searching for a director and star, Geffen now finds himself being sabotaged at every turn by the author.

"Anne is a difficult woman at best, and what her readers are interested somewhat beyond me," he says, sounding slightly miffed. "But for her to attack this movie for her own self-importance, when she has been paid as much [as right] and stands to make a lot more money selling her books is just capricious. It lacks kindness. It lacks discretion. And it lacks professionalism."

Geffen's impatience is underscored by his efforts in the past year to accommodate *Rise*. Early on, Rice had given Geffen a list of her favorite directors, headed by Ridley Scott and David Cronenberg, but they all turned the movie down. In the end, Geffen managed to recruit Neil Jordan. His name had made Cruise's shoulder after *The Crying Game*, which probably helped convince the director of *Androgyny* was open to any movie as iconic memory—and one of his earlier films, the creepy *The Company of Wolves*, even comes across as a kind reunion in one of Rice's novels. "She was thrilled," recalls Geffen happily. "She was a big fan of her."

With *Rise's* blessing, Geffen also pursued Darren Day-Lewis to star as *Lester*. Rice says that the taciturn Lewis kept talking six months before declining the role, reportedly because he was tired of costume drama. It was at this

point that the situation soured. Rice desperately wanted Jeremy to cast her. She also favored John Malkovich. She had initially modeled Lestat on Roger Hauer when writing the novel, but even she conceded that, at forty-nine, he might be a bit long in the tooth to play her virile vampire. Jordan, for his part, felt Rice's casting suggestion all too wise and too predictable. He wanted to avoid the same clichéd, androcentric-looking actors familiar to audiences from Macbeth and *Bel and the Goat* (Duccio, 1962).

Reached on his way to London, and sounding homesick after thirty-five nights of shooting in the swamps of New Orleans, Jordan insists that Cruise was his choice. "Sometimes when you go the opposite way from what people expect, you get the best results," Jordan explains. "Every casting choice is a leap," he says, "and if it works, it's because the actress makes it fit her own skin."

An Italian who speaks with a lilt, Jordan has surprised only two big-budget Hollywood movies in his career: *High Society* and *Withnail & I*, both box office flops. He is refreshingly candid about one of Rice's worst fears: that Cruise was selected partly for commercial reasons—confirming that "a very high-profile choice" was a necessity.

## He's Dark, He's Sexy, He's Dead

Seventy-two years of movie vampires



for a film as costly as *Interview*. He can't quite understand why she's making such a film.

"I had a conversation with Anne when I took the job and she was very enthusiastic and very sweet on the phone," he says, "so I've been amazed by all the public criticism." He pauses a moment. "I'm not sure what's happened, but it's all gotten so out of control it's ludicrous."

**S**ITTING IN THE SUN-DRENCHED parlor room, the only cheerful room in her otherwise gloomy, violet-colored First Street apartment in New Orleans, Anne seems overwhelmed with regret. For that matter, the whole house, with its gaudy mirrors and mirrors, staring porcelain dolls, and eerie mementos—skulls, crystal balls, and such—seems oppressively sad. As she explains her anguish over the course that events have taken, sloping and unslaking her sullen, pale looks, her assistant, who spends a small gold pin in the shape of a bat, serves an odd *Tabs*: We drink in silence for a moment. The only sound in the house is the clinking of the ice in our glasses and the who of the ceiling fan.

Rice didn't mean for things to go this far. She had put her trust in Geffen and Jordan, but she more than thought about what they were doing to her book—turning it into a commercial blockbuster—the more tormented she felt.

"I suddenly realized I was just furious," she recalls, clutching her glass. "I didn't speak out in any organized or planned way." She did it for her public. "These people have stood in line for me three and four hours. They are my readers, and they have rights," she says. "I was carried along by my readers. I didn't start the whole thing at all."

The story behind Rice's dealings with Hollywood and the difficulty in bringing *Interview* to the screen is almost as long and tortured as one of her novels. Rice's intense emotional ties to the book can be traced back to the tragic circumstances of its conception: *Interview* was written in 1973 in the drunken, godsend years after her five-year-old daughter died of leukemia. Much of the story is autobiographical. The character of Louis, the vampire who acts as narrator, is based on Lestat, and Claudia, the five-year-old vampire, is the reincarnation of her lost child.

By "madness" and "stain" I mean the desire to turn good books into terrible movie spectacles on campitude. But because it isn't everybody's idea of a good book, *Interview* also seems to be loaded with highly charged sexual imagery—homosexual, heterosexual, and bisexual. It is a steamy boudoir-lit of uncontrolled sexual urges. The plot, however, is

that interview belonged on Broadway—as a musical. The project fell through. By 1981 it seemed unlikely that *Interview* would ever make it as a movie. There were more than a dozen different scripts of *Interview*, all of them regarded as unusable. But when Rice's agent, Edna Lewis, became *The Vampire Lovers* (in which Lestat remains at a rock star), became a best-seller, Lestat bought the rights to both books.

To keep the ball rolling, Rice proposed a bizarre solution: a new script, changing the male vampire Louis into a woman. Since she had based the character on herself in the first place, Rice did not see this as a radical departure from the text. She also abhored the story's homoerotic elements and introduced a confirming maternal theme in regard to Claudia. Convinced that her "transvestite" character was a good compromise, Rice developed a treatment for *Interview* along those lines, with Christopher Lee as Lestat. She also thought Meryl Streep or Anjelica Huston could play the part.

Then Warner Brothers purchased *Interview*, and Geffen, who had a production deal with the studio, acquired the rights. Geffen pressurized Rice to take another stab at the interview script herself. Rice dusted off all the elements she had introduced over the years to please different producers

Geffen, adding that she had seven years to get the movie made her way and no grounds for complaining now. "She's not about anything but all appearance."

Geffen is not in a forgiving frame of mind. He feels that by bad-mouthing the film, Rice was playing with people's reputations. "She is hurting people," he says angrily. "It's just noisy and gratuitous and uncalled for." Geffen maintains that Cruise has not demanded any changes. "He has not had any input into the script whatsoever," says Geffen. "There is not one iota of truth in it. Any homophobia being alleged against Tom is an outrage and a bald-faced lie."

Jordan is particularly puzzled by Rice's claim that he is cutting out the sexual content. "To accuse me of taking all the homoerotic elements out of the movie, after I made *The Dining Guest* for all people—why would I do that?"

Jordan points out that despite all of the overheated passages in her book about two hours heating as one, her vampires do not have sex. They are, if anything, sexually abstinent. Lestat likes to stroke on girls, then move on to boys for the main climax. As Rice has the vampire Louis explore in *Interview*, "The vampire, physical love, castration and sex is involved in one thing, the kill."

and focused on a story line that would make Lestat "sparky" and "clearly establish that vampires are bisexual."

Over the years, screenwriters had transformed the vampire's bloodlust into a metaphor for AIDS, casting the story in a strange light. "One reason the film is so accepting of *Interview* was that people tended to make Lestat a stereotype of a horrible gay person," explains Rice. "They were terrible stereotypes. I used to call them the butt-drossers from hell." To correct the problem, she made what she terms a series of "minor changes," giving Louis a dead wife and child (whose family values pop up everywhere) and in one scene switching the small boys Lestat feeds on to a couple. Rice now concedes that it was her "hindsight" and not Cruise or Jordan "who 'transmuted' some of the scenes in to make it more palatable to Warner Brothers."I did the things Neil Jordan is accused of," she says.

Geffen showed Rice's revised script to director, and even she admits "it became apparent that we were going to have difficulty finding someone to do it the way we thought it should be done." In the end, Jordan threw out all the previous efforts and started over, putting back "the little girl, and the blood, and the sex," he says, clutching

Perhaps the greatest irony about Rice's studio is that all of the screenplays written over the years, including three of her own, Jordan's is probably true to the book. "Anne is hostile because her script couldn't be made," concludes

"There's a lot of bring going on," jokes Cruise, who doesn't want to give anything away. "It is a very erotic picture," he hints, explaining that every time Lestat goes for the jugular, it is done in a unique, achingly seductive manner. The guy has fangs. "The hard part is learning to bat someone in a different way each time," he says, getting two characters to tell the story of that relationship.

For Cruise, "there is a huge amount on the line—money, reputation, everything," says Jordan. "For me, it is not as much a role professionally." If the movie fails, the director says, he can always go back to making small movies "that you have to be brave to do like," he mutters.

Geffen thinks Lestat will end up very well. After all, Ian Fleming apologized after complaining that Sean Connery would make a terrible James Bond. But if *Interview* turns out to be a great movie, a work's master, "One will remember Anne Rice's attacks," says Geffen, "and she'll make a lot of money selling more and more books."

Rice may also have to get accustomed to seeing Cruise's face. After all there is the not insignificant matter of sequels. *Interview* is the first of four best-selling books that make up her gothy anthology, *The Vampire Chronicles*. Geffen, who bought the rights to the complete set, was clearly planning for his future. If *Interview* is a hit, Rice can look forward to seeing Cruise play Lestat again and again and again. ■

# The Lost Daughter

How one American family got caught up in today's witches' brew of sexual abuse, the Sybil syndrome, and the perverse ministrations of the therapy police

By John Taylor

**J**UDY SMITH was closing the breakfast dishes when the doorknob ringed late on the morning of June 17, 1991. She would expect anyone, but in Lexington Park, a small, prosperous town next to the Patuxent River naval base off the Chesapeake Bay in southern Maryland, people occasionally dropped by without advance word. The doorknob ringed again. There was something impulsive, almost peaking Judie's life, in the way the second ring followed so closely on the first.

Through her picture window, she could see the road, a short dead-end street of modest, weathered ranches and duplexes set amid tall pines. A squad car was pulled up next to the mailbox. When Judie opened the door, Diane

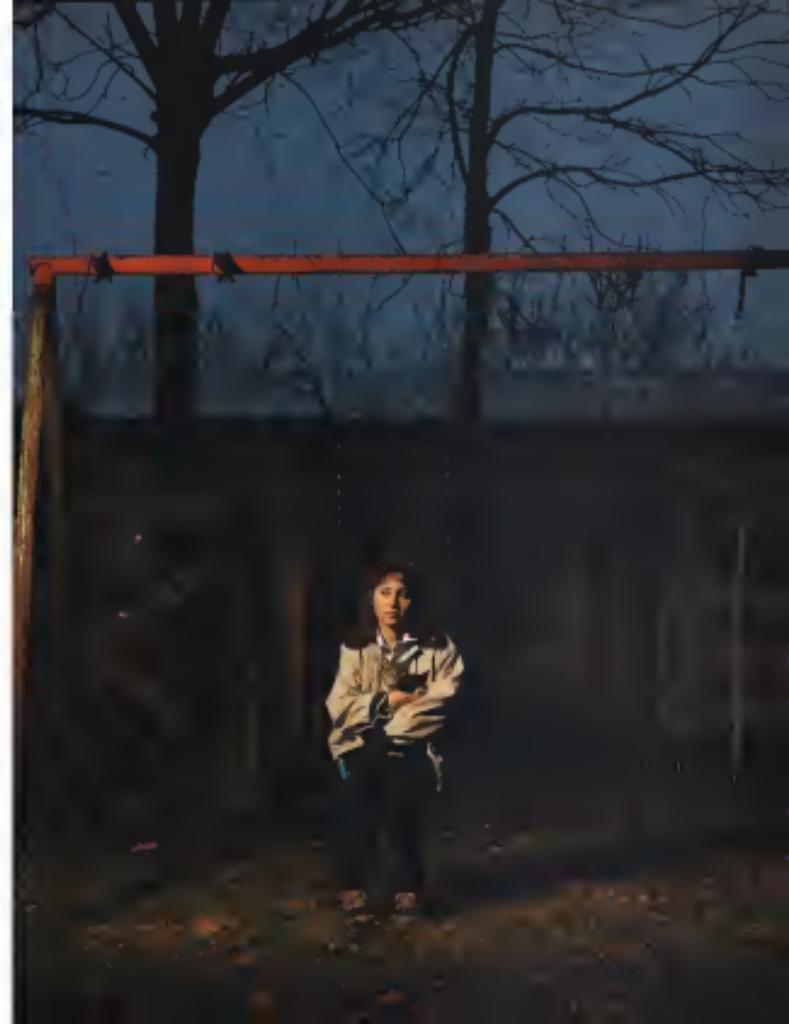
Thompson, a deputy sheriff for the St. Mary's County Sheriff's Department, stood outside. With Thompson was a social worker named Monica Rusconi and two unarmed officers.

At the sight of Deputy Sheriff Thompson, Judie felt almost ill. She had not had an easy life, but nothing she had gone through—her parents' divorce, the death of her father, the death of her stepmother, her husband, Therry's long sea tours on aircraft carriers during the Vietnam War, her oldest son's troubles in high school, her middle son's learning disabilities—could compare with the sheer emotional agony of the previous night.

In the fall of 1990, Judie and Therry's seventeen-year-old daughter, Donna, had been using a thermometer to treat an eating disorder when she began to suspect that her father had sexually abused her. During one session in November, as the therapist later explained it, her personality suddenly "split." A second personality, that of a seven-year-old girl named Jackie, emerged and claimed that Donna's father had raped her when she was twelve. The therapist put Donna in a foster home, and then, one night the following January, this time, Deputy Sheriff Thompson had arrived with a crowd of police officers; they had pulled their squad car right up onto the grass of the yard. After searching the entire house, going through Judie's underwear drawer, picking the lock on the safe where the family kept passports and birth certificates, and collecting a Barbie doll and a snowdrift as evidence, they had taken Donna off to jail in handcuffs.

Donna denied abusing Donna, but at first Judie hadn't known whether her daughter was telling the truth. As Donna's therapy continued, however, more personalities surfaced, and they leveled ever more graphic, ever more detailed, ever more grotesque charges. Judie became con-

The sixty-five facets of Diane...At her foster home in Michigan.



vinced her husband could not have done any of these things. The therapist and social workers told Judge that she was in denial. That was their favorite word. They told her that if she admitted what had happened, they could help her. They warned that if she didn't put Danny out of her life, force him to leave the house, she might never set Donna again.

Meanwhile, Donna had been diagnosed with multiple personality disorder and was hospitalized in Baltimore. There she said the sexual abuse had begun when she was an infant, that Judge had also abused her, that both her parents had abused her brothers as well, and that the abuse had involved satanic rituals.

"We're here to take your boys," Monica Banks, the social worker, told Judge through the screen door that June morning. She and the authorities had reason to believe Judge and Danny might be beating and isolating their sons. Judge explained that a therapist had just evaluated the boys and found no signs of any of the psychological traumas that would support such a charge. Banks, although she had no court order, declared that she was taking them anyway.

Fourteen-year-old Ben, who had been sitting at the kitchen table, overheard all this. He ran downstairs to the basement, where his younger brother, Trevor, was watching TV, and the two of them tried to escape through the back door. Anticipating this move, Deputy Sheriff Thompson and the two officers hurried down the driveway to the rear of the house. The boys hadn't even made it past the above-ground pool when the two policemen grabbed Ben and held his arms behind his back to handcuff him while Thompson cuff'd one of Trevor's hands to her wrist and led him back up to the roof.

By the time Judge, who is short and overweight, reached the yard, the din was furious. Trevor was crying; Ben was shouting that he had cops, and the Smith's German shepherd was barking hysterically. Judge begged the police to take the handcuffs off his children. They ignored her and pushed the boys into the backseat of the squad car. Judge was given a paper saying her sons had been taken away because officials had determined they were in imminent danger, and then the police drove off.

**T**HE HORRIFYING MEMORIES of child abuse regularly resurface in therapy sessions across the country these days often defy belief. As the stream of what some psychologists call "recovered" adult grown increasingly regular and relentless, anyone who sits out to explore a case like the one involving Donna Smith eventually suspects that, at some point, patient and therapist have entered an imaginary realm of their own creation, one in which fact, fantasy, and suggestion become unchargeable and accepted with equal ease as the truth.

When passed about this manner, psychiatrists, even those who subscribe to the idea of an "informed guess," will admit that they have no way of knowing whether what

their patients are telling them is really true. Anyway, they'll say, the accuracy of memory is irrelevant because, factual or not, it expresses some emotional truth for the patient. The pain is genuine even if the cause is an invention. All that may have been true throughout most of the twentieth century, when whatever transpired between patient and therapist remained confidential.

But the rules changed in 1970. That year an effort to address the underreporting of sexual child abuse, Congress passed what is known as the Mondale act. It established federal funding for state child-abuse programs that require a state's agency to provide blanket immunity to anyone and everyone reporting child abuse and to require teachers, social workers, and therapists to report abuse to the police or other state or private agencies.

The act in effect compelled therapists to report even the most preposterous accounts of abuse. It also prompted accusers from the consequences of making irresponsible or ridiculous reports. And it was passed at a time when many therapists had accepted the idea that sexual abuse, even unconscious abuse, was commonplace, that, as Harvard psychologist Judith Herman has written, "any serious investigation of the emotional and sexual lives of women eventually leads to the discovery of the secret secret," that, as the therapist and author Renée Fredricks has asserted, a supposed history of childhood sexual abuse "lurks in the background of cultures of ordinary high functioning Americans."

The presumption of widespread guilt, combined with the general absence of actual evidence and the proneness of the accuser, created a set of circumstances remarkably parallel to those that existed during the witch trials that swept Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The malevolent personalities said to inhabit the psyches of hundreds of thousands of young women like Donna Smith have their historical analogies in the "Damen" and "wops" that supposedly bewitched men and old women four centuries ago. Interestingly enough, the techniques used to summon forth demons back then and those used to bring out "alter personalities" today share striking similarities. And, just as with those who spoke out against the witch trials, stories of recovered memories have been reviled as heresies. The president of the International Society for the Study of Multiple Personality and Dissociation has denounced them as "conspirators in a CIA plot."

**I**N JUNE OF 1990 Donna Smith was, to most of the people who know her—at Great Mills High School, where she was a senior, at the Lexington Park Baptist church, where she had sung in the choir, and at the Lexington Park Volunteer Rescue Squad, where she was the younger member—an energetic, passionate, talkative, and intelligent girl. Her grades were excellent. She played fullback on the women's field-hockey team. She didn't drink, didn't do drugs, didn't party with the seniors from the naval base the way the older girls at Great Mills did.

She was also unusually disturbed. She had been hospitalized twice for eating disorders—for six weeks each time—and had, or so she said later, tried to kill herself by overdosing on prescription drugs, though the only consequence was an allergic skin rash. She had been to see eleven therapists, none of whom had she dropped; rather quickly. One was too fat, another asked the wrong questions, a third made her uncomfortable.

But just how disturbed she was at that time is far from certain. Donna was, it seemed, highly susceptible to suggestion. When she was eleven, one of her mother's sisters, who considered herself a "white" witch, stayed with the family for several months, cleaning daily on a sheepskin rug and leaving tarot cards under everyone's pillows to reinforce the "good spells" she cast. During that period, Donna grew so fascinated with witchcraft that Nancy Wilkins, her choir director at the church, became alarmed. "She got so caught up in it that eventually I had to say, 'Donna, this is not healthy,'" Wilkins says.

Donna's eating disorders may also have stemmed partly from self-dissociation. "I lied myself into this mess, but there's no way of lying myself out," she wrote in a diary she kept when hospitalized for bulimia. In the diary, Donna described herself as "bulimic, washed out, was someone." By the time the hospital released her, she was both. Her nosebleeds there had been so persistent, and she had taught Donna to keep secrets, such as vomiting into the hospital towels, which could be thrown down the laundry chute to avoid detection.

At the time Donna made the accusation of incest, she was seeing her health therapist, a woman named Cindy Meyers, who had a master's degree in social work and who specialized in abused children. Donna told Meyers, as she had previous therapists, that she had been sexually abused by a neighbor when she was three years old and living with her family at Subic Bay naval base in the Philippines, where her father was stationed.

As Donna explained later, she had gone to see a friend across the street. The friend was not home, but her father was. He took Donna upstairs, tied a red bandana around her eyes, and forced her to perform oral sex. "Milk was coming out, had to drink it because it was good for her," Donna said. "I took milk." At that point, she said, the three up

White Donna had believed her bulimia was caused by her desire to be thinner, Meyers decided it was connected to the sexual abuse. Her reasoning, as she wrote in a subsequent report, was a way of "regaining control." Toward the end of the summer of 1990, when Donna Smith had been seeing Cindy Meyers for about a year, she seemed to the therapist to start "dissociating," that is, losing focus, falling into a mild trance. "She would just lose track of time or say she was 'detached' or 'disconnected' would be a Japanese term," Meyers would later testify.

To Meyers, there could be only one reason for such dissociating: "Dissociation is a kind of memory footprint used by victims who cannot cope with the incongruity of sexual and/or physical abuse from someone whose role should be a nurturing [presumably she meant nurturing] one," she asserted in the report. In other words, a victim had been the victim of sexual abuse by the neighbor that had caused the dissociation. It had to have been someone close to Donna. Most likely, someone in her family.

Despite the supposed severity of her problems, Donna's therapy sessions did not seem all that important to her. She frequently canceled if they clashed with her field-hockey practice. She also admitted feeling guilty about the money her parents, who were not rich, were spending on the therapy. But Meyers convinced Donna and her parents that she needed to stay in therapy to work on her imagined problems. The Smiths agreed to keep paying, a rather risky decision if, as Donna would later claim, her father was set only about ending her at that very time.

Cindy Smith is a quiet, conservatively dressed, forty-five, but he looks older. The lines in his face are carved deep. He has lost most of his hair, and what remains has turned gray and is cropped close in military fashion. He grew up in rural Texas and joined the Navy out of high school, becoming an airplane mechanic. At twenty-nine, he became chief pilot officer and was later promoted to rear admiral. After retiring, he went to work for a defense contractor. He had tried to drink when he'd been young, but he gave it up after the children were born. He also began attending church regularly. While occasionally reclusive, he was devoted toward his daughter. He went to his field-hockey games, visited her in the hospital, helped her collect leaves for a school project. "She was always de-

**"I lied myself into this mess," Donna wrote in her diary, "but there's no way of lying myself out."**



The Smith family at an event: Danny and Cindy (right) and sons Trevor (left) and Eric (center) with their mother. Danny had sexually abused her and Eric, their younger brothers.

manding, but I tried to be a good dad," he told me last fall. As Donna's therapy progressed, she began to consider the possibility that she had been sexually abused by her father. Remembering nothing, but suspecting something, she one day called a child-abuse hot line and spoke to a counselor: "When I first talked to him I told him that I was having a lot of thoughts and vague inside and not knowing whether to believe if it was my father or not," she recalled. "But once I got complete memories, then I was very sure it was my father."

Donna's initial memories of abuse were remarkably innocent. She told Cathy Meyers that, as a child, she had sat on her parents' laps while they read her stories, that they had sometimes entered the bathroom when she was along a bath, and that her father had spanked her with a belt. Nonetheless, Meyers considered this evidence of possible abuse and reported the incidents to the police, who visited the Strauds and warned them it was against the law to spank children in Maryland.

Shortly after that, Donna produced two more accounts of sexual abuse by her father. She said she remembered him once falling asleep on her bed when she was 10, and that when she was about 12 and her father had been out riding horses, he had started riding her and his hand had mouthed her mouth. She wasn't sure if it was intentional or not. At that point, was exceedingly vague: "When Donna first started making these allegations, I told her, 'Why didn't you tell me this was going on?'" Julie Smith recalls. "She said, 'I didn't remember. I'm just starting to remember.'"

Despite the vague memories placed Donna in a foster home; she continued to see Cathy Meyers, and two weeks after leaving the home, she had a session that was to provide the first detailed memories of sexual abuse by her father. Meyers was a social worker, not a trained psychologist, but during the session, she reported, Donna "spoke into two personalities and 'Jackie' emerged." Jackie" revealed that on a Wednesday night when she was in the sixth grade, she had been playing with dolls in her bedroom, dressed as her Girl Scout uniform, when her father entered. "He told me I was older now, our special times could be more special," Meyers reported. "Jackie" as saying. He took her clothes off. "At first he kept hitting my stomach, then kissing my legs. Then he moved down between my legs. After a little while he would use his fingers in the same case. I don't remember anymore. I threw up that night."

"The weeks thereafter were followed by voluminous disclosures of long-standing sexual abuse by her father, to include castration, fondling, and penetration," Meyers wrote in her report. Donna told Meyers that when she was younger, her father had taken her favorite Barbie, which she had just gotten for Christmas, and inserted a feminist into her vagina until she agreed to intercourse. "These disclosures were accompanied by a rapid disintegration of her already fragmented personality," Meyers wrote.

The St. Mary's County Sheriff's Department was informed of the charges, and when Deputy Sheriff Donna Thompson called to Donna, she produced still more innocent-sounding tales. Once, Donna said, when her father and her brothers were riding horses, her father sent her brother on an errand to the garage, at which point "Jackie" emerged and threatened to expose the sexual abuse. Her father, she said, then inserted a hot-headed screwdriver into

her vagina and tortured her until she agreed to keep the secret. A little while later, Donna said that on another occasion he had sexually molested her with a shot gun. After that she also remembered a sexual life.

By this time it had become clear to Meyers that Donna was in the midst of a profound mental collapse. She was sent to Shadytop Farm, a large psychiatric hospital in the northern suburbs of Baltimore. The psychologist who interviewed her concluded in a report that she "clearly has MPD" or multiple-personality disorder, and identified six personalities: "Donna," who "seeks approval"; "Donna Christine," who has been subject to the abuse; "Jackie, a younger child, who is allied with Donna Christine and keeps all about the abuse secret"; "Sarah," an angry personality, who has homicidal wishes towards her father; "Squidgie," a younger child who remains attached to her parents; "Ashley, who is interested in the opposite sex."

On February 21, 1993, two weeks before her eighteenth birthday, Donna was committed. In the hospital, doctors of new personalities multiplied forth. They declared that Donna's mother had sexually abused her up until the age of eight by inserting things into her vagina. She and her father molested objects into her vagina and then placed them next to her bed so she could see them and be forced to think about what he was going to do with them. Under hypnosis, she said she had been systematically abused by having her arms hummed. Then a personality named the Preston materialized, demanding "blood sacrifice" and declaring "Sarah will come for me." When other personalities appeared to claim that Donna's parents had also abused her brothers Trevor and Ben, the police set off for the Strauds house to see the boys.

**E**VER SINCE SOCIETY, regardless of how technologically advanced or culturally sophisticated, is susceptible to mass hysteria. The waves of mass hysteria that washed over Europe during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—the living hysteria in Germany, the rousing hysteria in French convents, the hysteria in which people danced until they died of exhaustion, the man who spoke in tongues about participating in satanic orgies with priests and eating natural balalus—were all attributed to demonic possession.

In perhaps the most famous case of mass hysteria from that period, was in the Loudon convent in France fell into convulsions, suffered obscenities, recanted demoniacal fits, exposed their genitalia, and masturbated in front of onlookers. All of this was taken as evidence that they had been bewitched by a local priest, who had made the mistake of antagonizing the powerful Cardinal Richelieu. The priest was tortured and then burned alive. The nuns had been given an ultimatum in return for testifying against the priest, and when the cardinal subsequently out of the funds, their convulsions ceased.

But symptoms of possession did not need to be so dramatic. Often they were invisible to the untrained. The notorious English watch-hander Matthew Hopkins, who charged twenty shillings plus lodgings and travel expenses, made one Essex woman sit in a chair without food or water until, after almost twenty-four hours, the named the four angels who had possessed her. Pyrrhikos, Pyrrhikos, Pyrrhikos, the Crown, Grail-Gardige. Another woman accused of witchcraft was confused by the charge but, believing the

accusation would not have been made unless true, asked the English lord advocate if it was possible to be a watch and not know it.

In 1984, to help identify witches, cleric in Rome, Franses, issued a list of the indicators of demonic possession

- TO THINK ONESELF POSSESSED
- TO LEAD A WICKED LIFE
- TO LIVE OUTSIDE RULES OF SOCIETY
- TO BE PERPETUALLY ILL
- TO BLAINE FEAR
- TO MAKE A PACT WITH THE DEVIL
- TO BE TROUBLED BY STRIKES
- TO BE TIRED OF LIVING

What is of course noteworthy about the list is that these items are sufficiently elusive to apply to just about anyone, which made the job of the witch-hunter a good deal easier. The Roman has much in common with his circular list of demoniacal manifestations during the great self-abuse hysteria of the late sixteenth century J. P. Sellaer, M.D., the chronicler of epidemics and a man who believed in the existence of an evil mastermind epidemic, wrote seven manuals designed to alert parents to signs that their children were masturbating. These included:

- GENERAL DISBELIEF,
- SILENTNESS, EXALATION
- WARRIOR'S CHARGE IN DISEASE
- DISEASE
- LASSITUDE, FAIRIES
- FOR PLAT, AND
- LIFELESSNESS
- SILENTNESS
- NIGHTMARES
- WINTER'S INYOPNESS
- EATINGDRINKING
- SADNESS, LARIBIS
- UNNATURAL SOLEMNESS
- CONFUSION OF IDEAS
- CAPRICIOSUS APPETITE
- UNCHARITY OF SPHERE, INCLUDING FONDNESS
- FOR DISCRETE STORIES

As perhaps the paradigm for demonic possession, these are heartbreaking in their vagueness. And in that respect, they are, are remarkably similar to the lists of symptoms perpetrated by contemporary mental therapists to help people decide whether they may be harboring repressed memories of childhood sexual abuse. "Like these lists from a couple of childhood sexual abuse," like these attest from a compilation by Karen Freedman, author of *Repressed Memory*

- I HAD NO FRIENDS OR SEX UNTIL I WAS IN MY TWENTIES
- I AM PERSECUTED WITH THOUGHTS ABOUT SEX
- I HAVE SEEN A PERSON OF SEXUAL PERVERSITY IN MY LIFE
- I DETERE HAVE NIGHTMARES
- I HAVE DIFFICULTY RELAXING OR STAYING ASLEEP
- I FEEL AS THOUGH I NEED TO HAVE A STRANGE ATTRACTION OR AFFECTION TO S
- I AM SCARED TO BE ALONE OR TO LEAVE MY HOME
- I HATE GOING TO THE DENTIST MORE THAN MOST PEOPLE
- I OBTAIN FOODS OR BABIES NIGGLES OR NURTURE ME.
- I DO NOT TAKE GOOD CARE OF MY BODY

■ I IDENTIFY WITH ABUSE VICTIMS IN THE MEDIA AND OFTEN STORIES OF ABUSE MAKE ME WANT TO GET OUT OF BED AT 3 AM

■ I SENSE OUT OF IMMEDIATE

Freedman writes, "If you have some of [these] warning signals, you probably do have repressed memories." And they can be about one thing only. "If you have repressed memories of childhood trauma, the memories are undoubtedly about abuse."

To forestall any doubt about the legitimacy of a recovered memory, Freedman employs an extraordinary circular logic. She begins by warning that such memories won't seem real. "Repressed memories" never feel the same as real memories... Expect your repressed memories to have a hazy, dissociated quality to them. You will gradually come to know they are real, but not in the same way you remember something that was never repressed."

If patients have associations, they must persist. "Focus on your repressed memories for at least one year... You may have periods of disbelief, but suspend a final judgment until enough time has elapsed. The essence of a profound disbelief is an inhibition that memories are real."

Freedman discourages the patient from anxiety about insurance charges. "You may become overconcerned about making false accusations in particular. You do not want to do that because abused you when that is not true, but this need for power can take on an exaggerated importance.... You can become too caught up in seeking external relief.... If months or years down the road you find you areegasus about details, you can always apologize and set the record straight."

**S**OME THERAPISTS use the image of a forceps to describe how they treat wrench human issues out of their patients. As part of this process, they regularly employ techniques like "guided imagery," "guided movement" and "body work," primal therapy, Rolling hypnosis, and psychodrama. The techniques with which they market these "cures" are as aggressive as the cures themselves. Consider the following advertisement, which appeared in the July 1993 in the magazine of United Airlines:

- MOOD SWINGS ■ PANIC DISORDERS
- OBSESSIVE COMPULSIVE DISORDERS ■ PHASSEACKS
- DEPRESSION ■ HYPERSENSITIVITY ■ ANXIETY
- ANXIETY ■ LOW SELF-ESTEEM
- RELATIONSHIP PROBLEMS
- SEPARATE ANXIETY ■ HABITUAL BOWELS
- FMS ■ ■ OBSESSIVE ■ MULTIPLE PERSONALITY
- HEDONIC ADDICTION ■ PARENTING PROBLEMS
- REMEMBERING
- INCEST & CHILD ABUSE IS THE FIRST STEP TO HEALING
- WE CAN HELP YOU REMEMBER & HEAL
- 1-800-337-4848

Despite all this, most contemporary psychologists deny the possibility that they might be agreeing remarks to their patients. A few, however, admit that this is indeed what happens: "At times it may be necessary for the therapist to put the pieces together and speculate about the emerging picture and its significance," Christine Courtois, a Washington, D. C., psychologist, has declared.

**T**HE BELIEVE IN *witchcraft* is the greatest of *household* was the epithet of the notorious *Molice Mafioner* (Witch's Hammer), a seven-month-oxytocin paroxysm that classified seances by their symptoms. Not only was one required, at that time, to believe in *witchcraft*, one was required to believe every accusation of *witchcraft*. King James's famous 1609 *Statute Concerning a son of historical constellations to the blisstide* set declared it a crime to do a person's death and punished the testimony of "young children and liars in such trials. And testimony on behalf of accused witches was self-eliminating: "It is an infamy of *witchcraft* to defend witches, or to allow that *witch* stories which are told as certain are mere deceptions or illusions," the demonologist Martin Del Rio wrote in the sixteenth century.

It is equally true of the incest systems that have swamped the United States. *Stepfathers* are considered morally equivalent to, and in many instances indistinguishable from, those accused of sexual abuse. They are as "touched by the *incest lobby*," and as "advocates for child molesters." The regularly called a pedophile on the psychiatric cocktail circuit," says Paul McHugh, dean of the psychiatry department at Johns Hopkins medical school and a crusade of *incestuous* women.

Those in the *incestuous* movement actually refer to contemporary child abuse as a holocaust—a recent survivor in Washington, D. C., for instance, therapists invited participants to come to one session and collectively beat drums to express their rage at this "holocaust"—and stepfathers of *incestuous* women are compared to people who deny the existence of the Jewish holocaust.

That was the charge made against Harold Leid, a professor emeritus of psychiatry at the University of Pennsylvania, when he was invited to McGil University in Montreal that past November to discuss his skeptical views of recovered memories. As soon as word of this event leaked out through the survivor network, the university was flooded with threatening letters and calls. A newspaper headline in the *Montreal Mirror* read *MASTERS BRINGS 'SECRET' LEID TO MONTREAL*.

Leid went anyway, but past as he was beginning his talk, a number of people in the audience stood up and began shouting and waving placards. Leid stood until they stopped, then tried to begin again, but the pressure rose a second time and drowned him out. Someone ran off a stick bomb and a fresh bunch closed the room. Eventually, Leid was forced to give up and, without dislodging his tie—on the idea that most intrusions are true, some was but emboldened with memory, and some false—left the auditorium.

**"I have no idea how many personalities I have,"**  
**Donna said. Before trial,**  
**a number was chosen.**

gib as an orderly at a nursing home and had on one of those residents blue uniforms worn by hospital workers.

Donna Smith is in many respects an extraordinary young woman. She is more articulate and self-confident than most nineteen-year-olds. She can be arrogant, can delight in her own willfulness. "I'm a brat," she said while testifying against her father. "Well, so is a brat—I'm just very, very strong-willed." Nancy Williams, Donna's close friend, says, "She wanted to manipulate everyone." "She was very mouthy," says her grandmother. "Something would go wrong in the morning and you'd hear about it all day, she'd talk, talk."

Donna is an unusually self-involved. She talked easily and endlessly about her multiple personalities. For example, she attributed to them the good grades she had always received. "One personality does math, one does English, one does science," she told me. "That's why taking exams is such a breeze and why I have such a high IQ."

In one moment, Donna offered blustery professional medical opinions about her brother. "It strikes me as odd that Sam's been diagnosed with attention-deficit disorder when he's an obviously dissociative." In the next, she made matter-of-fact claims about suffering the most horrible abuse: "The bone maximally abused—I call it a sexual abuse—since I was an infant. I have very specific memories." She gave an example: "When I was growing up I put all kinds of stuff in my eyes. I wanted to be blind in my left eye. It was hurt for several years when I was an infant to a severe oak. When I was growing up I was scared to

**L**AST DECEMBER, two years after Donna Smith accused her father of raping her for years on end, I called her in rural Michigan, where she is living with her foster family she agreed to see me if her new therapist could be present for support and if I would pay the therapist's fee of eighty dollars an hour for the two hours we agreed to spend talking.

The therapist's office was in a new medical center surrounded by farmland. Outside the window, a harsh wind blew many feet across the withered cornstalks, but the office itself was warm and inviting. It had two pink chintz armchairs and a wooden desk with a shelf of academic books and popular self-help publications. One volume, *Sexual Abuse*, had its spine turned toward the title was hidden.

While waiting for Donna to arrive, I asked the therapist a friendly, self-possessed woman in her thirties—if any of her patients claimed they had been victims of sexual abuse:

"A lot of them are coming in with very similar stories," she said. "Very similar."

I asked if she believed Donna's charges against her parents were finally true.

"I don't know," she said.

"I haven't been treating her long enough."

Donna arrived shortly thereafter. She is blonde, with a pale oval face and slightly upturned nose. Her chestnut hair hangs in long, deep tresses. She had come from her job as an orderly at a nursing home and had on one of those residents blue uniforms worn by hospital workers.

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death someone was going to burn it again and I would do it myself before anyone could do it to me."

It was to survive such abuse, she said, that she developed multiple personalities. "I dissociated so much that I broke off into separate personalities." "I'm being hurt, tortured, I can go inside and turn it off. I can go to the inside where you can also run away with a flavor from my writing to my elbow"—she held up her thin arm—"and I won't feel it. When I was in the hospital I cut myself to prove one thing—I marked myself soணly lines lead to me, and I didn't even know it until later sometimes I would cut myself and draw with my own blood."

The horrors she suffered, she said, have given her the capacity to experience correspondingly powerful feelings. "I developed so much as a child," she told me. "Elderly people dying in nursing homes die love and affection, too. They were huge things you want to hold their hands, and I will do that, for hours. I never got that as a child." Because she is so emotional, her volunteer work with rescue squads can sometimes overwhelm her.

"I've seen babies who've been killed by drunk drivers. I've gone into houses and seen babies who've died and sometimes I get so sad, I don't think I can bear it," she said. "Maybe you should do something else," I said.

"People who've been hurt want to be comforted."

When Donna is not demanding hard currency by her parents, when she is talking instead about actually living with them, they sound like rather ordinary people, with their own burdens and frustrations and personal shortcomings, who are struggling through life but who have failed to meet the emotional expectations their guilt-ridden daughter had for them. About her father, Donna said, "He's very quiet, very shy. He's a loner, that's why he joined the Navy. There was no father-daughter relationship. Me and my dad did not talk. He did not want to be around anyone. That's why he sat in an office all day and ordered parts. How hard can that be?"

Donna writes copiously in journals when she was a teenager. Her parents have kept many of them, and while they seem Donna as at times intensely unhappy, the journals contain no dark hours of incest, much less lots of sexual abuse. Instead, her complaints about her parents are remarkably routine. "There think their parents are a big problem, just like I think," she wrote in a journal in 1986, when she was fourteen and when, according to her later allegations, her father was raping her four to five times a week. "Some teenagers are re-

ally close to their parents and use them as their role models, but I don't. My parents hug me most of the time, but I try not to let it show. They often embarrass me, and every once in a while they may cut me down. When that happens I want to talk to somebody about it, but I don't want them to say your parents are right. That's why I liked talking to Sherry [friend], because she doesn't say you are the one that is wrong, even if you are."

I asked Donna why there was no mention in her journal of sexual abuse, assault or otherwise.

"You won't taught to keep no evidence. If I every wrote anything I made sure to burn it. That was the way."

Donna now says her multiple personalities have been with her as long as she can remember. "I always knew that I had what I considered childhood [imaginary friends] inside," she testified during her father's trial. "I kept this quite a secret. I was very embarrassed about it, that I had never got rid of my childhood imaginary friends."

Donna and I sat in the barbershop with Cathy Meyers, that she suffered from multiple personalities. As a matter of fact, she had made the suggestion shortly after she had seen *Sybil*, the popular movie about a young woman who developed multiple personalities after being sexually abused by her mother—in a psychology class at Great Mills High School. Donna was so struck by the movie that she rented the video and watched it again at home. "We all talked about a afterward," recalls Kelly Hart, Donna's former best friend, who had also taken the psychology class, "and we were all going that maybe we had multiple-personality disorder, and Donna said she thought she had it."

Before 1970 there were, worldwide, only some two hundred reported cases of multiple personalities. By 1984, there were over one thousand; by 1986, four thousand. More recently proponents of MPD have stated around a figure of twenty-five thousand. Colin Ross, a psychiatrist in Dallas and the president of the International Society for Multiple Personality Disorder, has written that up to one out of every hundred people suffer from the condition, which can require years and hundreds of thousands of dollars to treat.

The number of personalities a patient can have has also expanded exponentially. In the 1970s there was *The Three Faces of Eve* Sybil was said to have some 200 personalities. Some patients now claim to have more than one hundred, more than four hundred, more than one thousand. In addi-



The original multiple personality disorder (MPD) from a seventeenth-century woodcut depicting a "witch" being forced to name her "names" (the children that inhabited her soul).

tion to "alter personalities" there are "personality fragments" and "personality states." Specifying studying multiple personalities also wills of "severe MPD" and "latent MPD," of personalities that remain hidden for years at a time and then emerge only briefly and almost imperceptibly, of personalities that appear only once, of people whose MPD remains hidden because all the different personalities work in concert to disguise the symptoms.

After seventeen months of hospitalization at Sheppard Pratt, Donna Smith ended up clearing the had at least fifty-five men, who ranged from a twenty-one year-old woman to an infant. But even that number, Donna explained to me, is arbitrary. "I have no idea how many personalities I have—no one has any idea. There may be all sorts of personalities I don't even know about. But before the trial everyone kept asking for a number, so we just said fifty-five because they wanted a number."

**P**ROFOUNDLY WORD-WEAK the explosion in diagnosis of the disorder closely to Sybil—the vast and extraordinary story of a woman possessed by sixteen separate personalities," as the book's jacket copy proclaims, Sybil, a pseudonym, was the patient of a New York psychotherapist, stated Dr. Cornelia Wilber. Wilber diagnosed her patient as suffering from a multiple-personality disorder that was brought about by her mother, who, according to Sybil's recovered memories, showed off girls like spoons and little handbags and barefooted up her vagina, compelled with her husband in front of her, defecated on neighbors' lawns while her daughter was forced to watch, sexually molested her, and engaged in lesbian orgies with young girls in her presence.

Wilber herself did not actually publish a report of her treatment of Sybil. Instead, Wilber approached Flora Rheta Schreiber, an English professor, and suggested she write about Sybil. Schreiber's book is a macabre romance novella, full of re-created scenes and dialogue. She sets the story from the point of view of Sybil, her various personalities, and her therapist, shifting in and out of characters to suit her dramatic purpose. A huge commercial success, Sybil reached the top of *Time* magazine's best-seller list and was made into a movie starring Sally Field as Sybil and Joanne Woodward as the benevolent Dr. Wilber.

To therapists who specialize in multiple personalities, Cornelia Wilber, who died in 1990, is a sort of patriarchal cult figure. They pay her ritual homage by the use of phrases like "the Wilberian resolution" and "the post-Wilber paradigm" when referring to the notion that multiple personalities are created by childhood sexual abuse. But the cult of Cornelia Wilber may have been founded in a misconception.

Herbert Spiegel, a psychiatrist and former professor at Columbia medical school who specializes in hypnosis, diagnosed and treated Sybil in the mid-1970s when Dr. Wilber sent her to him after her psychosynthesis had become stalled. "Wilber asked me to see her because she was treating her as a schizophrenic, but some of her symptoms didn't seem consistent with schizophrenia," Spiegel told me one afternoon last December, sitting in an office in his Upper East Side apartment. "She was suicidal and would come to see me when Wilber was out of town. When I talked to her about aspects of her life, she would say, 'Do I have to become Helen

or can we just discuss that?' I said, 'Why are you asking?' She said, 'Dr. Wilber would want me to.' I said, 'You can if you want to,' and she would not. She would discuss her problems, her suicidal tendencies, without mentioning personalities. Sybil's mother was a schizophrenic, but there was no sexual abuse. It was not corroborated. I treated her for more than a year and was in contact with Wilber during that time, and Wilber never mentioned MPD."

"That came up later," Spiegel continued. "After Sybil had stopped treatment, Schreiber came to see me and asked me to cooperate with her and Wilber on a book. I agreed and said I would open my files on Schreiber and as she was leaving the office that she was calling it MPD. I said that she's not real. She doesn't have the key figure of MPD, spontaneous switching between personalities. That came up during therapy. They were hysterical initiates. What gave it away was her telling me Wilber requested certain personalities."

"I said I would work with Schreiber if Sybil was diagnosed as a hyposuggestible or a dissociative disorder. Schreiber [who died in 1981] said that psychiatric caregivers wouldn't be able to tell it unless it was MPD. I said that was a hell of a reason for a medical diagnosis. She got mad as hell and left the room in a huff. She wouldn't talk to me after that and neither would Wilber. Their goal was to do something to corrupt the imagination of the public. They succeeded."

The did not bother Spiegel too much at the time because the techniques Wilber used did seem to help Sybil and she never made a formal accusation against her mother. But now, Spiegel said, more therapists influenced by Sybil are working at what he calls "memory wells" and diagnosing MPD in patients producing "shory memories" that patients then take into court. "I addressed some of them at one of their annual meetings, and I was surprised by the number of the questions. They have no training. They believe the existence of each personality. They know nothing about hypnosis. A therapist can hypnotize suggestible patients without either the therapist or the patient being aware of it."

Spiegel pointed out that people with dissociative disorders are extremely susceptible to hypnosis. "To dissociate is, in fact, to go into a trance, and they go in and out of trances constantly, often without being aware of it," Spiegel said. If suggestible patients like Sybil, whom he considered a hypnotic virtuoso, pick up a premise—say told or infer that there is a *Conspirator* plot to take over the media or that they've been usually abused by their fathers—they can fall in the depths on their own." The details are presented to the therapist as memories, and if the therapist doesn't know what is going on, he or she accepts them as memories."

Hypnotized patients will pick up easily accept premises that contradict their core convictions and sexual experiences as well as those that reflect them. Spiegel showed me a videotape of an experiment he had conducted in 1979 with NBC correspondent Frank McGee and a highly hypnotizable subject. The subject, who had left off center political views, was quickly put into a trance by Spiegel, who then told him in a general way that there was a *Conspirator* plot to take over the American media. After coming out of the trance, the subject, without any prompting, quickly revealed the existence of the plot, and then, as McGee pushed him for details, began, with total conviction, supplying him with his own imagination names of people who were part of the conspiracy and locations where secret meetings had taken place.

"Memories can be vivid under hypnosis," Spiegel said when the tape was over, "but they are not necessarily true."

**I**N THE 1980s Jean-Martin Charcot, the chief physician of the Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris, believed he had discovered a new disease. He called it hysteria-syphillis, since it exhibited the flaccid symptoms of hysteria and the convulsions of epilepsy. But one of Charcot's students noticed that, at Salpêtrière, hysterics and epileptics had been placed in the same ward, and the hysterics, who were notoriously susceptible to suggestion, had steadily begun mimicking the epileptics. After realizing his mistake, Charcot isolated the hysteria-epileptics and treated them with counter-suggestion. Their epileptic symptoms disappeared very rapidly.

Counselling-suggestion is not a part of therapy for most MPD patients today. On the contrary, following Cornelia Wilber, therapists treat each personality as an individual entity that has to be educated. To do this, they encourage their patients to probe their own minds for alters and then to elaborate their functions and identities. They recommend that some patients create bulletin boards so alters can leave notes for one another. They invite patients to imagine a boardroom and then populate it with their personalities. They have patients "map the system"—that is, draw diagrams that link alters and their relationships to one another.

The therapists themselves also set out to become acquainted with all of a patient's alters. It's not enough simply to wait for them to appear; they need to be called, invited, summoned. One therapist suggests pressing one's thumb against the patient's forehead, repeating the name of the desired personality, and saying, "I want to talk to you."

Getting through to alters can require persistence. "It is useful to extract interviews," Richard Kluft, a psychiatrist at Temple University and one of the leading experts claiming the existence of an MPD epidemic, has written. Kluft warns that the process can take hours. During that time, he says, patients must be prevented from taking breaks or even covering their faces. "In one recent case of singular difficulty" he says, "the first sign of dissociation was noted at the sixth hour, and a definitive spontaneous switching of personalities occurred in the eighth hour."

"This is diabolical," the Dark Ages," says August Pifer, a psychiatrist in Seattle who set out to study the literature on MPD after an colleague was discharged from a hospital's staff for irresponsibly diagnosing patients as having the disorder.

Pifer, given the overtones of exorcism and the prevalence of satanic imagery, revealed Christian therapists have become particularly fascinated with multiple personalities. One such Christian therapist, James Friesen, a professor at Fuller Graduate School of Psychology in Pasadena, California, and author of *Uncovering the Mystery of MPD*, believes in the existence of both demons and alters. He has conducted exorcisms as well as treated patients with MPD, which he sees as two distinct but somewhat similar activities. He warns of the danger of tantalizing alters for demons

it's a problem, he says, because of "the many similarities between the bodily signs that indicate a dissociation and those that indicate a demonic possession."

Friesen also warns that an alter could be accidentally cast out in an exorcism. Even if the alter manages to hang in there, Friesen says, merely claiming it to be a demon "can fragilize the alter seriously enough to keep it buried for some time." Another side effect, according to Friesen, is that "the personalities themselves become convinced they were demons and they were unmercifully persecuted."

Other therapists maximize the effect of exorcism on alters. The alters, they claim, are too close to be taken in by the medical supervisor. "I have been around many patients who have supposedly been exorcised—their alters have been cast out as dead entities," says Gary Lufkin, a psychiatrist in Dallas, has written. "In those cases the alters were still present in the body. They weren't dead; they knew better than to make their presence known while they were around therapeutic-religious leaders who thought they were helping by trying to cast them out."

Alters can't be expelled through exorcism, the thinking goes, nor can therapists suggest them to their patients, because there are not even so, some psychologists maintain, alters can be suggested by others. "Information has come to me from a number of sources that cult members are instructed in how to create MPD intentionally in their children," writes Friesen. "This minimizes the agency because the children's host alters will know nothing about the results.

Electric shock, drugs, and hypnotherapy are still fully employed by the cult members to program their children to create alters while the children are about two. Using brainwashing-type punishments, the cult members turn particular alters to believe only in specific ways, and appear only at specified times."

Friesen's science might be suspect because of his Christian upbringing, but Colin Ross, head of the International Society for the Study of Multiple Personality and Dissociation, has made an intriguingly similar claim. Ross has argued that multiple personalities have been implanted in unwilling subjects by the CIA so they could then spy in one personality and, if captured, switch personalities so that, even under torture, they could convincingly insist on their innocence.

Ross comes to this conclusion after scores of his patients told him their multiple personalities had in fact been created by the CIA. According to Ross, the patients were taken to training centers, hypnotized, placed in flotation tanks, given hallucinogenic drugs, and made to wear virtual reality goggles all in an effort to create different personalities that could snare secret information. Subsequently, he claims, and these subjects' recovered memories of the experiments began to surface, and the agency, in an effort to prevent them from becoming known, has orchestrated a campaign against the repressed memory movement.

The CIA is out to discredit them all, and if the [subjects of the experiments] feel they're starting to uncover some of the mind-control experimentation that was done and that's hidden in the alter personalities in the heads

## One expert claims that the CIA has implanted multiple personalities in unwilling subjects.

ground, naturally they wouldn't be enthusiastic about that happening," Ross told a reporter for the Canadian Broadcasting Company program *The Fifth Estate*. "So it would be necessary to have some sort of political strategy in place to counter that." According to Ross, the CIA's strategy is disinformation, passing out word that "it's all just caused in therapy. It's fantasy. It's not real. It's hysteria."

**A** POLICY STATEMENT from the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry declares that in cases involving allegations of child sexual abuse, "it is essential to obtain a history from the perspective of each parent. The clinician needs to be able to consider all sides of the story and any other relevant family sexual abuse, that could account for the child's symptoms." Donald Strobl, the first psychiatrist assigned to Donna Smith after she arrived at Sheppard Pratt, set out to do precisely that.

But this enraged Donna. "I didn't want Dr. Strobl to meet my parents, nobody wanted Dr. Strobl to meet my parents," Donna recalled. "It was just an instant he had, and I think it was a genuine success." After refusing to be treated by Dr. Strobl, Donna was assigned another therapist, who made no attempt to contact her parents.

Consequently, the emergence of the multiple-personality epidemic comes at a time when traditional psychiatrists are being challenged by biological psychiatrists, who hold the rather heretical view that most mental disorders are biological or genetic and should be treated with drugs rather than with "talking cures." It comes, too, at a time when speaking cases have forced psychiatric hospitals like Sheppard Pratt to reduce long-term care, creating empty beds, cutting more revenue, forcing layoffs.

But the dubious and expensive treatment of multiple-personality disorder has produced a new source of revenue for such institutions. In fact, just as Donna arrived at Sheppard Pratt, the hospital was opening a new unit specializing in the treatment of dissociative disorders and multiple personalities. If, as was the case with Chacón's hydrocephalus, people suffering from multiple personalities are responding to suggestion, then placing them in a unit with other people in the same condition, encouraging them to read voluntarily about their disorder, and interrogating them again about their personalities would all assure highly counterproductive. But that is the treatment at Sheppard Pratt. Donna was soon immersed in a world populated only by therapists and people with multiple personalities. They were not a cross section of society. Some 75 percent of the patients in the unit came from the medical profession. Donna was a clinician who herself had specialized in MPD.

Donna stayed at Sheppard Pratt for eighteen months and eventually ran up a medical bill of \$100,000, which was paid by her father's insurance company. Kathryn Garske, her new therapist (who was not a psychiatrist), helped Donna "stop her system" so she could become acquainted

with her various personalities. Garske and Dr. Richard Lowenstein, the head of the dissociative disorders unit, also hypothesized Donna more than fifty times, and during these sessions would on occasion ask different personalities to appear. With Garske's help, Donna learned to hypnotize herself and eventually reached a point where she was putting herself in trances without even being aware of it.

The process of recovering and conditioning realistic abuse is extremely disturbing, according to Lowenstein. In fact, it is so disturbing that, to the uninitiated, the process itself sometimes appears to be driving relatively stable patients insane. This seemed to be the case with Donna. Under hypnosis, her various alters revealed themselves to Lowenstein. When he later told her about their claims of sexual abuse, she at first denied them. But as treatment progressed, she was frequently overwhelmed with horrifying spontaneous memories. "People in the word would say things and just sit me off," she told me. "I went through a period of complete flashback. They were horrifying. They would just come into my head and I would be shaking. I was so sick."

These flashback caused Donna to shield her eyes in efforts to blind herself, to bite her wrists and bite her toenails, to job pens in her ears, and to bring her head against the wall. "Banging my head helps get it out of my head," she said. She would also cut herself and on one occasion severely burn the back of her hand with a curling iron. When she became disengaged in this manner, her temperature would soar, and she would feel as if her blood was going to boil. To calm her down, the interactions in the ward would "shockpack" her, that is, wrap her tightly in a sheet soaked in icy water.

It is a controversial technique no longer practiced in institutions like Johns Hopkins, and even Richard Lowenstein was disturbed by its use when he began working at the hospital. "When I came to Sheppard Pratt I was horrified that they were using cold, wet shockpacks because I thought nobody used them," he recalled. But, he said, once he observed how calming they were to patients, he changed his mind.

**P**URILY ACCUSING the supposedly abusive parent is a central rite of passage for the mental survivor. Donna insisted to me that she didn't want to go through with the trial against her father but the law said to "stand." Otherwise, everyone would have called me a liar." She did prepare for a thoroughly rehearsed her testimony with Garske, who played the role of the lawyer examining her and who typed the rehearsals to check the consistency of Donna's answers.

The trial was held at the Anne Arundel County courthouse in Lexington, five miles from Lexington Park. By the time it began, last September, Donna's family hadn't seen her for almost two years (The Smiths had been forbidden to contact her, when Judge and Mrs. Smith's Christmas card, the judge discovered, in fact, had been sent). Donna seemed pale, unhealthy, emotionally drained. Her brother Bea, still angry about the charges that had caused the police to haul him and Travis off

for psychiatric evaluation, began shouting at her in the hall.

When Donna took the stand, her phalanx of therapists and supporters sat as a row facing her. Now and then Donna communicated with them through the coded finger signals her "executive personality" had learned to use when she took over. Donna explained to the court that she had selected five personalities that would appear in court. These she considered "helping alters." They knew about the abuse, she said, and could testify about it. She would not bring angry alters into the courtroom because they might scream. If she passed, she said, it was because the various alters were conflicting among themselves about the answer.

For the most part, Donna was quite lucid during the trial. Her account of sexual abuse by her father was graphic but also clinically detached, and it contained a number of details strikingly similar to her previous account of sexual abuse in the Philippines.

"I remember my father sitting on the bed next to me," Donna told the court, "and standing up to take his clothes off and sitting me up and telling me to裸 his dick... and he said, 'Daddy's little girl comes and you will drink it'... I kept giggling and my father would hold my nose so I would have to swallow what he called the milk."

Donna Smith took the stand in her own defense and denied the charges. Her lawyer introduced a gynaecological exam of Donna that showed no signs of trauma. Michael Spokas, a Baltimore psychiatrist who had interviewed Donna for the defense, said it was highly unlikely for someone to see eleven therapists and only on the twelfth to uncover a repressed memory of chronic sexual abuse. Instead, he said, Donna's sessions with Cathy Meyers, her viewing the movie *Sybil*, her eighteen months of institutionalization and hypnosis, her refusal to allow psychiatrists to interview her parents, all led to the conclusion that, while she was now completely convinced of the accuracy of her memories, they were the product of suggestion.

Spokas was followed by Paul McHugh, of Johns Hopkins University, who had also interviewed Donna but who had read her records and the court transcripts. He and Dr. Don Smith suffered from a hysterical disorder that had been induced by doctors who believed in multiple personalities. "I don't believe that she is lying and I don't believe that she is insane and delusional," he said. "I believe that she has been strongly persuaded to see herself in this way."

After eight hours of deliberation, the jury reported that it was "unanimously deadlocked," with eleven members favoring acquittal and one man holding out for a conviction. "I just couldn't believe she was making it up," he told a local newspaper reporter after the judge announced the verdict. Later, the juror called Donna at Sheppard Pratt and took her out to a football game.

**A**THOUGH ONE MONTH before the trial Donna's doctors considered her so disturbed they had her shockpacked ten days after it ended they decided she was healthy enough to be discharged, and she immediately left for Michigan. Her parents still prodded from California, telling her "The judge told us we're not to try to call her, and if she calls us we're supposed to say, 'No sorry, Donna. I'm not allowed to talk to you,' and hang up." Judge told me last November she and Danny were staying in the living room, drinking Diet Pepsi and eating Pizza Hut

pizza. Bea had gone to a church function and Travis was playing in his room. It was not late but Danny was exhausted. Laid off shortly after his arrest, he now had a new job, in Washington, which meant a two-hour commute each way and he was on the road every morning when it was still dark. With more than two dozen legal bills, he had no choice.

There is, in the end, no irrefutable proof that Danny Smith did not rape his daughter, and, like the holocaust itself, many people find it inconceivable that Donna had made up such accusations. That was apparently the view of state officials, who, despite the dropped charges, would not name Judge's house or sponsor the small day-care facility she once ran in her basement. After all, it is hard to think of a more reprehensible crime—one worse, in many respects, than murder and betrayal—and Danny will always be known, even among his supporters, as the man whose daughter claimed he raped her. Nonetheless, Danny and Judy harbor no anger at Donna. "We do not blame Donna for this," Danny said. "Hu raze was measured for the social-service bureaucrat, the champion, and the doctor at Sheppard Pratt. Most ignorant of all, he felt, was the failure of the hospital staff ever to contact the family to get their side of the story. Instead, they diagnosed Donna as having multiple-personality disorder, arrested her for multiple personalities stemming from child abuse, then treated her in a way that made her seem to get much worse, at least in the short run, and then reinforced her belief that she had been abused."

Danny's lawyers also ingeniously used the multiple-personality diagnosis to explain away anything inconsistent with their interpretation. Asked about the lack of references to abuse in Donna's doctors' therapist's aid the entries were not written by the personality that had suffered the abuse. Asked why Donna had lied and never talked to the hospital to contact her parents, they were told that was a bad alter who wanted to reenact with the family to perpetuate the abuse.

"I don't think I've cried as much in my life as I have in the last two years," Judge said, looking up from Donna's high school yearbook, which she had been leafing through. "I can't see Donna. I can't talk to her. I get up at night and cry, cry to God, 'Why, why has this happened and why has our taken away?'

"My parents continue to torment me," Donna told me these words later. "They're causing me emotional turmoil by constantly sending me letters and begging to do with me. I don't want to have anything to do with them."

I told Donna that her parents seemed sincerely convinced of their own innocence, which was why they had joined the False Memory Syndrome Foundation in Philadelphia and why they were speaking out about their case.

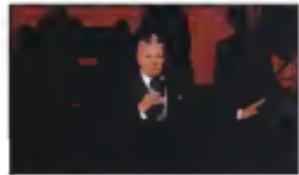
Their behavior irritated Donna. "I wish my Dad had pleaded guilty and gone into therapy," she said. "But even if my parents admitted what they did, they would have to do much therapy in it before I could talk to them. I'm so much further along psychologically than they are."

If her parents weren't innocent, I suggested, they either were psychopaths who could be convincingly or were themselves afflicted with multiple-personality disorder and had evil alters unknown to them who surfaced just to commit abuse.

"I think they lead double lives," Donna replied after a moment. "I won't say they have multiple personalities, but I've thought about it."



Easy Emeralds and bleeding rhododendrons—an Indian tribe hits the jackpot at gambling and Sinatra comes to the Mashantucket Pequots. **BY JULIE BAUMGOLD**



# Frank and the Fox Pack

**F**RANK SINATRA WALKS in the door and the wind follows him. It blows his black satin bomber jacket with the emblems on it flat against his back. For a moment he is lost, despite the entourage moving him along, despite his wife, Barbara. There is a bronze statue of some Indians and a small, surprised crowd held back on both sides by state troopers. "Frankie!" A woman's voice comes out of the crowd demanding him and he hesitates. Then he bends over to her, bending slightly forward as if he is facing the screaming wind and

feeling the weight of being Frank Sinatra, almost seventy and still at it.

He might be anywhere, in any year, any casino, a singer in the right leading for the presidential suite and another performance. He can never step outside this circle anymore, walk into a casino, into the basement pit and get a few bills. The people with him are always moving him along, to the elevator, to the suite, through the underground passage to the stage, to the staircase, where they put up a screen around him.

"Frankie! He hasn't got time to look around, but this is Parawood High Stakes Bingo & Casino. It's owned by the 87th members of the Mashantucket Pequot tribe and it is big, maybe the biggest and richest casino in the Western Hemisphere, though there are guys who will come out of Vegas

When it rains it pours: The Estimation, the \$240,000 statue that is the symbol of the Pequots' prosperity.

and Atlantic City to argue this point. Parawood is in the southeast of Connecticut, and about a tenth of the population of the United States lives close enough to drive to it. It's the only large casino in New England. It is owned by the Western Pequots, a tribe that was twice almost wiped off the face of the earth but is now rich enough to hire designers to open a new hotel and Fox Theater, named for the Fox people.

Sinatra's son, Frank Sinatra Jr., was there in the theater rehearsing the orchestra a few hours ago.

"Whoowhoo! Hold on!" he said. "We've taken 'Sharing Bear' and 'Whoowhoo' out of the book. ... All men can chase for the drums are out. ... Guys go home New York, only Indians are allowed to park here." Frank Junior was actually making Indian jokes while Richard "Skip" Heyward, the chairman of the tribe, was standing with a fan of microphones in his face at the door of the theater, being interviewed. Behind Heyward's back, his hands were clasped and his thumbs were dancing. Heyward is under a lot of pressure.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY HARRY BENSON

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**Poor relations** The chips are down for Mark Beharrie and the Eastern Pequot, but, he says, "We have plans."

sure as a visionary and the man who saved the Pequots from extinction in this century. Penwoods came out of his head.

This afternoon he left his small blue wooden house on the reservation down the road and checked into Penwoods' new hotel with his wife, Carol, the daughter of the initial chairman of the Fond du Lac Cherokees. Carol left behind her silver Mercedes but brought along a lot of kind of ordinary-looking luggage. The Haywards were there for the Stevens census, and they were not alone. High-society, major Indians, and major Malaysians were sliding their key cards into the slot in the elevator that allows access to the eighth floor. One of the palafloors hired to show the press around was rigid with hide-fear because the elevator contained these chief Indians and some press who were asking about the eighth floor but not quite registering Blag, whose father is a white man. What an "Indian" looks like in a bag, something must have among the Eastern tribes, where the bloods are mixed and everyone is very sensitive. For the blond Indians and the black Indians and the Portuguese Indians and the "White Indians" Indians, it all seems to come back to what a person feels he is in his heart and in his blood (now if it is fifteen-sometimes something other than "Western Project"). This is what Donald Trump, who is fighting Indian issues, means when he loses it from Congress this past October and said, "Go up to Connecticut and take a look... they don't look like Indians to me," making everyone in the room wonder: He just didn't get it at all.

Frank Stevens now is being moved up to the presidential suite, where, after doing his show this opening night and apologizing for his throat, he will sit at the baby grand until 7:00 the next morning, singing with Carol and Slap Hayward, who, like him, is a night person and the focus of a big score. But Stevens is used to living in a storm, and this

could be any place that gives him the best rate and sells out his shows and pays him hundreds of thousands of dollars.

Stevens loves the strangely basal, regulated life of green, a life that he transports with him wherever he goes. He goes to bed whenever the sun comes up, gets up around a six or gins in the afternoon, has his eggs, and sits at the piano to vocalise, stretching out his vocal cords because he is a concert singer. After a show he plays, reading and brushing, no flat-out singing, until the others are worn out and, one by one or in pairs, disappear with the light.

During the show he tells a bit about the way he lives now: "You set up a program, we go wherever we work." He tells about his friend "Jackie Daniels" and says of Barnes, "She doesn't drink and it's terrible. I go home and drink alone." He picks up the glass, loving each sip, mock shuddering at the sight of the water number. "Tired by age, with the trouble gone from his face, he half-apologised for singing only standards, for the world had changed and there are no songs anymore. "There's no new music. The guys who wrote these songs, they go to bed with them they want to live in the mountains, those sort bastards!" Oh, "They're gone drunk and dead or something. So we go on 'Shoot!' That's how Stevens begins a song, "Shoot!" he says to Fredie Jones, a man who once sang some songs like him and who now stands with his back to the audience and conducts the orchestra and prompts him when he loses his place or forgets the name of a composer or arranger. Sometimes he repeats himself and has eyes open to the TelePrompTers. Sometimes the singing voice is flat, it's sometimes quavering when he speaks. He shads the low quality in song and becomes the thinnest, most emaciated high, finger-snapping dinner-linen again. The danger comes back. To hear him is a reminder that those who do things better than anyone else in the world can never shake their allure.



**The queen of Indian casinos** Penwoods is expanding to become a "destination resort."

Finally, on the third night, he says of acknowledging Penwoods to the audience: "Is this a saloon or a party? They sent up a track to get me up here and it was full of money."

He likes to pretend it's just for the money it has been and that Barnes forces him to sing. But he loves and needs what he does. The audience is seated casino-style at long tables of strangers. The curtain goes up and he is there with his back to them. Stevens does not walk out on the stage, he just turns around and it's Fredie, baby, "Take it, Fredie! Shoot! 'Fly Me to the Moon.' What so god! I take a shot. Like that song goes down the run of the hill. 'For Once in My Life.'"

"This is a song that when they were giving copies to all the vocalists I was ready to throw up, but it grew on me. It covered me from head to foot. Shoot! 'Strangers in the Night,' exchanging glances. 'The Sun Is Big to Come.'"

When he was young he sang those songs as though he had lived, and now that he and his audience have lived they never even smile.

"And, babe, it's gonna be fine! Head! Head!" he growls with a flash of the old bad-boy brand, "Moonlight in Vermont." "My mother used to call me 'Cracker' because my ass is so small," he says as he gets on the stool. "Mack the Knife" at the end with a tribute to Bobby Darin, and "The Andy Ellis," who sang that song with such feeling he does not know what he can add to it. He's full of Stevensians. No "Wheatherspoon, it's such a groovy day." One solo song with the organiste and the detail and he walks off, singing again, "Angel Eyes" or "It's 3:00 A.M., a man falls into a bar. All you people represent one homie." "One for My Baby," "My Way," "New York, New York." Married, a little shower and flavor like his audience, he calls, "You're the greatest" and dismiss them. He's happy, cool, sarcastic and still a bit dangerous in a way no one has managed to equal.



**The architect** Richard "Skip" Hayward made it all happen.

The voice of Stevens singing duets with people half his age fills the halls. On the phone, in the car, in the conference, "The number and float like a queen." Stevens stays in his room, watching CNN, sometimes talking with people about his collection of electric trains.

Two rough guys are holding the elevator for one little guy who looks as if he just might know a few secrets. He's one of those big little guys who come to life around resort pools. Mr. Stein Table. "You all come to my suite," he says, inserting his card into the eighth-floor slot. "What make you write?" he asks a man in the elevator. "This one," says the man. "I'm an Indian, too," says the little man. "I'm Wapie-who, an Indian Indian." There's laughter as the elevator takes him up in the brand-new hotel in the ten-year-old nation of the Mashantucket Pequots.

**T**HE CONNECTICUT LAND, classic and sacred, is full of Indian names, impenetrable rocks, and rivers where the bodies of the Pequots were dumped. Here is the swamp with the bleeding rhododendrons where the Pequots were to hide from the white men after their fort was burned in 1675, and here is the river that carried the sachem, the chief, back to his people, dead in his canoe. Or as legend has it, a history that often alters the fierce Indians and creates the Pequot community. Here at where they were slaughtered, forbidden to live on these lands or call themselves Pequots. Some were sent to Bermuda and

the West Indies as slaves, and all were forced to merge with other tribes so the Pequots would be eliminated. Blood and fire and horrible criss have now given way to people pumping silver into slot machines and a tribe growing rich while the Kanawha, a twelve-thousand, 1540,000 acre Indian, turns red for the oil and energy's assessment.

This land is now called the Mashantucket Pequot Nation. It became a separate nation in 1975, and nine years later Foxwoods casino was built on it. Down in the hills Pequot reservation, under one of the waterfalls, the film of the re-created 1637 massacre keeps showing Captain John Mason's troops attacking and the burning Pequots shrivel in the dark. Some Seminoles who have come here from Florida to study the gourdshell, watch the Pequots fall for the second time. They sit on the benches with their hands spread wide on their knees and they don't make a sound in the Pequot's shout, "Oonwah" (Engagement) and the Engagements shout, "We want bare board" and the fire crackles and the men and women and children scream. Around the corner from the reservation doors in the poker room, the gray-faced ones are playing *Asian Stud* and *Black Hold 'Em*. Overhead Hot Love is spilling Easy Ensemble Double Diamonds, and Flam Cray is vomiting silver on a go 4 percent average payoff so there is always the barking sound of the apid. The Fox Godzilas are waiting in the bacarate par. Old, loose arms go up to pull the lever on Stacks of Fortune. Spins Till You Win. There's a lot of the database the white man gave the Indians in the reservation, but those who come through have fewer of those now.

Up on Wintechuk Hill Road, near by, the railroads sit together and the small hills lay into the ground. The die rail looks like the kind of place home which it might be hard to return. This is the reservation of the Eastern Pequots, who split from the Western Pequots in the seventeenth century, and, as the neighbors say, is "as poor as Job's turkey."

"That's what we used to look like not so long ago," says Skip Hayward. That was what they looked like after the casino project and the strip-mall project failed, when the hydroponic lettuce and the guitar project and the Mr. Puss movie or less failed, too. Then came the gambling project, the great answer for the Fox people. Then came Foxwoods.

Now the Western Pequots are rich, the richest people in southeastern Connecticut, perhaps the richest Indian tribe in the States. They are reportedly referred to in the local paper as "fabulously wealthy," which is not necessarily a compliment in Connecticut. They are the bosses here, employing almost nine thousand people, creating hundred-million-dollar buildings, and buying thousands of acres of land in a state they once owned. They have hired their neighbors to shuffle cards in fire-warmers-toasted rooms, to smile and bob down dirndl in Indian-style rooms with real feather mask in their hair.

Skip Hayward now is all mad and made it happen because it was his mission. His grandmother, Elizabeth George

Phouli, "the Iron Woman," told him to hold on to the tribal land. Skip gave up a good job as a pipe fitter at Electric Boat in Groton to live in a trailer on the reservation with dozens of Pequot genealogists around him as he fought to secure more blood lineage and bring his people home. He renounced the Western Pequots, and many in the tribe consider Hayward to be much more senior as was the sacred leader after the massacre, Roland Conimicutte. In the 1600s Hayward's grandmother was the last Pequot on the reservation. She was alone on 164 acres. Now 250 people with at least one-quarter Western Pequot blood have come home to 3,000 acres.

The Pequots are a model tribe, the prides of the valley, and their cards make high into the sky above the sacred swamp and the three hostile neighboring towns. They have outlasted the state and the governor to get a monopoly on legalized gambling in Connecticut. When the state wanted to balance its budget, it went to Foxwoods to guarantee its shortfall, and only then could it close the state books.

Pequots are in a model crisis just Pequots in 2006 on the reservation, with its will-call HUD houses, now being enlarged, and new metal-frame houses rising. Some have jobs that pay them hundreds of thousands of dollars and have bought second houses off the reservation, all will have very rich children. They have provided themselves with health care and care for their elders, a big marriage-house in the shape of a swallows' nest, a hall prack, a basketball court, and an archaeological dig, and there will be a 45-million Pequot museum. The money is not just handed out, most is reinvested, and there is an intelligent incentive program that pays the Pequots if they live and work in the arts and educate themselves. It holds them close.

"Isn't it beautiful?" says a member of the Eastern Pequots crossing down the grand driveway from the new home of a Women's Prayer. "I people who used to be in federal assistance with new cars and gold cards, taking vapors." And so do the Yankee neighbors, who are envious that the tribe wants to annex about seven thousand more acres.

Donald Trump has a word out that each tribe member could be making more than a million a year. Trump—who was looking at \$10 million dot revenues for his October at his Taj Mahal in Atlantic City versus \$3 million at Foxwoods—has had the federal government to challenge the advantages of Indian gaming. Lowell Weicker Jr., the governor of Connecticut, now defending the Pequots, has called Trump "a dork" and a "lout." Trump has called Weicker "a fat slob."

"The Western Pequots are the epitome of what other tribes want to achieve economically," says Eli Saria, chairman of the Big Eagle Wing Press. "They are a sovereign nation, and, especially that, they have become international." A bit too international for the towns that look with suspicion at Foxwoods' investors. Because Connecticut banks were afraid and unable to take the risk, UBAF, an Asia-American bank, backed the bingo hall, and now the Liss family of Malaysia has backed the casino and future development.



**The Pequots are repeatedly referred to in the papers as "fabulously wealthy," which is not necessarily a compliment in Connecticut.**



The gray-faced man: Gambitting late into the night, desperate to catch a glimpse of *Blades*.

**H**ERE AT NOON on this autumn Wednesday of States week in Connecticut, "the land of steady habits," thousands of people with white the management calls "a flexible entertainment schedule" are entering the fair zone. The bars are whizzing into the bars and blushing open. The cars are turning off Route 1A. Foxwoods pops off the horizon, big in the landscape. Blue roofs by day, a red fever glow by night—a blinding backscatter to late gamblers and the mind-blowing boozes all over the Northeast. They drive past the constant drump and whump of Malaysian-financed construction. The road is rutted and torn as heavy equipment shifts the earth for the new three-thousand-seat bingo hall, the theme park and golf courses; Foxwoods is moving from the dry trigger bingo league into "destination resort" land.

The people ride the escalators past the Indian holding his peace pipe to the sky standing in front of a waterfall in a pool of sunrises and dollar bills. The suns behind him is the Great Cedar Swamp, where, after the city massacres, Wampanoag lay strapped to the ground and cursed the swamp and the white man. He commanded the gold rhododendrons there to bloom red to remind the people of the slaughter, and the once-gold rhododendrons now grow red in their crimson.

It looks familiar here, clean and sun-washed, everything tall and wampum-lavender, the tribe's colors. In fact, it looks just like the Esbury Mall with us. That's a course with cute little balconied houses selling nonstop-earring Indian gear—silver nests with bunches of turquoise, leather belt buckles, Indian dolls with a tomahawk in one eye—a few shops, a giant, throbbling gambling pit, a few more shops with carved boxes and fringe pictures and sequin



The savvy gambler: Mickey Brown brought in the Las Vegas and outside Connection.

Bring wampum: Waa big and lots more in the gift shop.

used photographs of unseeing Indians, another drinking, bedding-out party full of Indians eating and discharging, a Christmas memento, an Indian memento, another party it all becomes the same—dismayed, pacified, and that is the idea. Frank mugs, fake rocks, fake silver, fake Indians—all run by the unemployed high-sell workers of the downsized Electric Boat in Groton.

There's the jet. The Indians are moving fast now. Air-conditioned, air-pumped, they're bouncing into the fever zone now that gambling has no cause at all, now that what Mickey Brown calls one of the "best boats" has been removed. It's just another form of mindless entertainment. There is a lot of video gambling now to make it easy for the generation raised staring into games with their thumbs on barons to make the transition to video poker, video craps, video frug, and video blackjack, where no one has to remember himself in front of a dealer with the fact that he can't add to everyone. Games are groped on the frust m'times, whenhears are in the wheels. No one looks up.

In the hub of a lottery money becomes another cost, your "wampum card." The faces are stained cassio gray in the ma chia light; the eyeballs red from the name of red staring into Thyia Channa. They have the fever. They don't look up.

Casino people go on and on about the new "gamblers" and gamblers and how the new "gamblers" never players just buy out in a casino, losing before



they on an average visit, to sit and sit and connect their arms. Psychiatrists will say it's manipulation or looking for "Lady Luck," who is Moma, in order to fall back into her arms, where the gambler is always a winner. But it's the fever—a \$10 billion national need to dash dots on bingo cards and pull tabs, to flail down mugs shooting craps, to hold these change cups rabid black at the bottoms from coins, this childlike need to play dominoes when the silver kerchiefs from the frust m'times the players let a pat in, a sentence that they have won at one m'game of life.

Rowhows can briefly contain the fever. Thousands of people are here—eighth thousand on a weekday, twenty-five thousand on a Saturday or Sunday—and there are not enough places to park even with a capacity for 7,400 cars, not enough places to sit, not enough head room. Rosey Indian waiters in off-dressed mugs in the Muckers and serve no alcohol and still they are down with the hungry, learned. It has been arranged for Frank Searus to be able to gamble here, but he never does. Still, the sightings of him occur all over the casino floor. Gamblers tell one another he was seen playing bacarrat in the middle of the night, and this hope is enough to encourage those who travel on hope. Memories of his young, present peace through the names He is Fil Joey, Nathan Detroit—all the famous risk takes he has played, all those living on the jagged cards, throwing, spinning, tapping an ash while watching the cards and trying to keep the desperation hidden. He is Vegas in the agio, the Rat Pack in the Sands, still the big time.

Don't you know little boy, you never are won... Searus's voice moves into the pit from the concourse. No one looks up. It takes a shrug to get their attention. Suddenly there is a tremble, as though a subway is driving through, this

street like the man is stopping. People hurry past, toward the center of the concourse, to the Rainmaker, that resolute form of a brawling warrior among his cocked hats at the arum sky. Every hour on the daytime hour there is a laser show. The Rainmaker is the trembling reminder of what Fourmadi is all about: the size of the land, abandoned spurs in the air. Most of the people here don't know they are in another nation, that Indians are special by law excluded from the Constitution, a sovereign people. The degenerate gamblers—the kind who break a smile when their chips collapse after sitting too long at the table—don't care.

Ed Sabra, a Thuge, watches the Indian turn and. Lasve says, "I tell people who want to understand Indian affairs that the foreign country is outside the reservation. The same land it works." Many tribes were federal recognition, which gives them the status of a defeated nation and pays them reparations to buy back their lands. It acknowledges them as the prime symbol of the nation—the nation. It is also the way to Class III gambling. Since the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act of 1988, 197 bingo parlors and casinos have opened on the reservations. Some fail because of bad or crooked management, sometimes the mugs move in, but sometimes, like here, they are the economic solace, an answer beyond farming and smoke shops, a path to a stable world wealth, with jobs for the area, money and tourism for the state.

Searus runs from the fake rocks where the Rainmaker stands. John Holder, a tribe member and a former drifter with Electric Boat, worked obsessively on the statue. He took rock mounds from the bayard trees, had the tribal archaeologist to study the bushels and mosaics, kept refining the Indian's chest muscles. Then the forty-five hundred-pound Indian, cast and polished, crossed the streets from Florida on a flatbed truck to rest in a \$10,000 grove of trees—a \$1 million crapping entertainment.

Holder came home to the tribe in 1978, when fewer than fifty people lived on the reservation in a half-dozen trailers. His cousin, Skip Hayward, was in his trailer, living off sales of cordwood and bags. Skip would walk through the road, saying, "The hospital will be here, and the school will be here." "There are many such stories of Skip." He walked Mickey Brown around outside the bingo hall one night when the tribe was interviewing him. Mickey was in his newlyweds' pineapple and sand good shoes when Skip walked him through the woods and grave pit, telling him "Skip dreams," and "I don't think he even knew it was running," says Brown.

"Long ago, before the ancient ones, the land used well..." says the Rainmaker. He starts to ramrod. The night crabs, a wolf howls, rain falls. The synthesizer thunders hoarses and a miasma of rain comes from the pool.

Then the blood-red Indians and the white faces staring up, their bodies in their car seats with their scared faces. And on all these white faces, most raised high before political correctness, is the image of the "noble savage" and the infuse gift. We brought him alcohol, snuffpots, moccasins, mafra, student gas, whooping cough, scurvy fever, croup, pneumonia,

plague, cholera, and polio. This is the malnourished subject, see how we lived before you. See what you did to us. Come to the casino. These gifts washes the endeavor clean as the Indians, now wet, glistening with silvery water as he looks like an ice sculpture or, as one reporter wrote, a giant sand man.

**T**HE EIGHTH-FLOOR high rollers' lounge hangs over the sacred Great Swamp. Here small burst rounds of heat and the kinds of food gamblers consider lavish appear at all hours. At all hours is the fine viceroyales and high rollers mind to eat.

Skip Hayward has finally roared himself and is raising himself available. People make excuses for Skip when he misses appointments, disappears, and fails. He has learned the behavior of some important men and is aware when it is convenient. He is forty-five, a hardy man, a bit heavy with prosperity. He makes about \$200,000 a year, has a boat, and just bought an spacious property in the next town. He has a grown son, but the tribe is his child, his creation.

Skip is one of nine children of a white naval officer descended from a pre-Revolutionary War family. The family grew up all over, and Skip developed newspapers in many cities, graduated from North Kingstown High School in Rhode Island, and worked in many different power plants. When people discuss gambling, he looks as if he would rather be deep-sea fishing. Like his Indian ancestors, he likes to wonder. It is hard to think of anyone more American than Skip, who belongs to another nation.

People from Skip's generation remember the day used to scope the houses of the car when they were to visit his grandfather, Elizabeth George Floudie. She had things bought in stores, and she had no money. She lived from the land, went to the well for water and the root cellar for the food she cooked on a woodstove. The teacher was lost under the low ceiling when she made her blueberry dumplings and baked beans in the brown stilted house that is kept, almost as a shrine, down the hill from Elizabeth George Drive. For Skip, whose family moved frequently, the Old Homestead was that center of many big families that there was also the Elizabeth Floudie who raised her house and kept partitioning the room to improve it. She didn't want welfare, but she wanted some help, and finally she and some others went to work with the towns and fought to land they killed their dogs rather than pay the health and licensing fees. She packed up a gun and drove off those who thought they could take the land after she died and make it a state park.

The Pocumtuck were a tribe "as extinct as the ancient Moles," so Herman Melville thought, and he named the doomed ship in Melville's *Moby Dick* for them. But they were there around him, the Strong People, going out in their canoes to bring in the whaling ships. Long before that, they had followed the game and the fish and made wampum from shells. In that century they lived in Connecticut rather like Gypsies,



The locals even fear the tentacles of the terrorist group the Shining Path creeping from Peru through the Connecticut woods.

coming to the back doors to tell the local people their fish. The industrial jobs went to the white people first, and many of the Pequots had assimilated with African-Americans. Living on the land with traditional ways did not work very well for a Pequot in the late twentieth century, but Ship saw how things had succeeded for other tribes. He sounded up those with some Western Pequot Blood, and some of the Eastern Pequots and Narragansets then came into the tribe.

Aided by a professor from Smith College, Heywood petitioned for federal recognition, which Ronald Reagan granted in 1983, and with it came \$800,000 to buy land. The tribe used its own money to start the bingo hall, but when that ran out, the Pequots went to the Arab-American bank. The Penobscot tribe of Maine guaranteed their loan and made the firm management agreement to run and help them. In 1986 the Indian Gaming Act allowed federally recognized tribes gambling rights such as were permitted in the state, which does have Las Vegas rights. Then began the fight that proceeded through the 1990s and the Pequots won in federal appeals court and Melody Brown wrote the complaint with the state. Ship Heywood has said he would not fight if another tribe opened a casino (10 slots are allowed in another casino, the Pequots may no longer have to pay the state a quarter of their slots profits.) Meanwhile, Foxwoods is far ahead and has the Lure behind it.

"They are like us," says Carol Hayward, moshing her fingers. The Lure supposedly use a lot of themselves in their Pequots, for the Lure were also "in conservation." Their patriarch, Tan Sri Lim Goo Tong, who was knighted by the King of Malaysia, began as a cossack who built a road to the top of a mountain and developed a community there with a casino the way the Pequots have done. Their company, the fifth largest in Malaysia, has casinos in Australia and the Bahamas, and interests in ports, oil, shipping, rubber trees, and cruise ships. The younger Lim were educated in their land and at Harvard and understand the Foxwoods area; it is said the Pequots' theme park will be similar to one the Lure have in a rain forest outside Kuala Lumpur—all of which sounds painfully exotic to the Connecticut neighbors.

"It's a cycle of terror," says a local engineer in league with the Trump forces. "Foxwoods terrorizes the psyches of the people in the towns." Always reluctant to consider the locals imagine all sorts of sinister consequences for the Lure family with rumors of drugs and white slavery. They feed a concern that the Pequots have visited China and been "cured" by the Communists. Lure even fear tentacles of the terrorist group the Shining Path creeping from Peru through the Connecticut woods to Lenape.

It's the old war between the tribe and the towns of Lenape, Noot, Saponi, and Pocumtuck, where descendants of the colonists live. The old war with themes of betrayal, invasion, land grabbing. In many town meetings, which Connecticut has moved to an all-in, in courtly and impersonated format to the older meaning that the name Pequot means "destroyer of men," the fight continues. Dams jobs for the area, neighbors of the casino object to traffic, congestion, the glow in the sky, and the annihilation of land that will suffice it from the tax rolls. The Pequots at one point offered their town \$5 million to end their opposition, but that did not work. They tell stories of people getting several mortgages on their houses in exchange for chips and top-notch gamblers in the parking lots, waving papers to their cars. Money is laundered there, they say, though Melody Brown

says the casino cache systems is the same as Atlantic City's and that Foxwoods complies voluntarily with the banking-money laws. The towns are suspicious about where all the money is going. They are the poor tribe here, wondering they don't have the money to fight the rich political Indians.

"The big story there is organized crime. Al Capone is there," says Trump, speaking of Indian casinos in general. "No one likes Indians as much as Donald Trump," he began in his notorious "they don't look like Indians" speech (which one congressman called the most offensive he'd heard in sixteen years), and this has become his current crusade.

The townspeople talk of a separate nation, a level playing field. Then there is the steerer controversy. The Pequots are not happy with the bronze statue erected in Mystic in spite of John Mason who had never driven. The plaque reads "To commemorate the heroic actions of Captain John Mason and his men who overthrow the Pequot Indians and preserved the settlers from destruction. A and America here."

"This was the place we'd call as a nation the end of our reign," says Ship Heywood. "The colonists destroyed our entire tribe two centuries, where we are today."

In the museum under the waterfall at Foxwoods, an eighth-generation Pequot is explaining to the Seminoles about the other Pequots, the eastern branch, which separate from the Westerns and is itself divided. The Pawtucket Eastern Pequots have petitioned for recognition. Their lawyer, William Brigham, who is from one of the old Yankee families, says they feel they have the right to conduct gambling, but Mark Schatzman, their tribal vice-chairman, says, "We have a lot of deeply religious people. Alcohol, gambling, and gambling are not favored." Mark and his wife live in a trailer with their Indian son. "We don't have to make a million dollars a day," he says. "Something is going on now. I think it will happen soon. We have plans."

**T**HE MUD FROM AROUND the iron Women's house made flakes on the clean new floors of Foxwoods. It was the middle of the night and the bouncer was looking for Frank Sinatra to watch him play. The Ratemaker was in a down mode, as the muffled sounds of birds, crickets, and poor frogs were in the air.

Nothing was real here but the bodies in the casino glow. It did not look much like entertainment in the middle of the night.

To get you deep in the heart of me, Sinatra was singing on a record. The bouncer guessed Sinatra was upstairs now and wondered where he thought about in the middle of the night when he sat at his piano or at home as he sang one of his many explosive electric train whistling around the track.

Mark didn't have a job, and Joe. I knew you're going steady to close. Sinatra sang, though this place gave no sign of closing. It was like a fever dream. But it wasn't where the iron Women's people lived. That place, near her house, was growing, too. The Mashantucket Pequots had come back. Ship had found them. There were many now, and things were so much better on the reservation. "Indians" meant front doors, nests and education and white men carrying the luggage. Maybe no one should ever judge until he has seen the Old Homestead and walked with the red on his shoes in the giant house near the Great Cedar Swamp where the Indians once hid and the rhododendrons still grow with blood in their hearts.



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Two years after he went to prison for a rape he says he didn't commit, the humbled ex-champ has found a weapon even more powerful than his mighty uppercut—his mind

# The Education of Mike Tyson

BY PETE HAMILL

**A**N ARTIFICIAL CHRISTMAS TREE stands in a corner of the waiting room, with a bunched-up bedsheet at its base leaping snow. Unmatched pieces of cheap furniture, some wicker, some plastic, are arranged awkwardly around the edges of the room. It could be the antiseptic lobby of a second-class motel except for the view through the picture windows behind the Christmas tree: two parallel steel-mesh fences topped with barbed wire and a slope of snow leaping toward black walls and ten brick buildings. The complex is called the Indiana Youth Center. But it's not a place where schoolkids play checkers or have basketball on frigid afternoons. The barbed wire makes it clear that that is a jail.

So does the posted rule against bringing drugs or alcohol on visits, so does the order to place visitors and packages in a locker in the far corner, along with all cash in excess of five dollars, any pens, needles, tape recorders, books, all hats and overcoats, and so does the stamping of

your hand with invisible ink, the snapping of pockets into a plastic bag, the body search, the passage through a metal detector.

The rules of existence obeyed, I walk down a long, wide ramp into the prison, pause at a sign forbidding weapons beyond this point, and wait for a steel-rimmed glass door to be opened. Up ahead there are other such doors, with guards

and a few prisoners moving languidly along a corridor that is lit like an aquarium. The door in front of me pops open with a click. I turn right to a guard's booth, where I hand over my pass and am told to shear my right hand into a hole in a wooden box. An ultraviolet light certifies the stamp. I am then instructed to go through the door to the left, into the visitors' lounge, and give the pass to the guard behind the high desk in the corner. I do what I am told and wait. In the lounge a dozen people sit facing each other on thick plaid-covered chairs, emanating static and profanity. Drinking soda bought from machines, trying

hard to know, glancing smugly at the clock, conscious of time. Behind than a wall of panes windows opens upon a vista of grey grass and black, tan walls. The Indiana sky is the color of steel.

Then, suddenly, from another door, Mike Tyson appears. He smiles, gives me a hug, and says, "How are ya, buddy?"

Twenty-two months have passed since he vanished from the highroads of crime, from the ballyhoo of champion and the mask of women, from the gym where he prepared for his violent trade, from the arena that roared when he came after an opponent in a ferocious rush, his eyes hooded, glistening with bad intentions. Twenty-two months have passed since he was convicted of raping an eighteen-year-old beauty-pageant contestant who consented to leave her own Indianapolis hotel room at nearly 2 a.m. in the morning, who moved around the streets for a while with Tyson in his rented limousine, who then went to Tyson's room in the Casser-



King of the ring, Tyson often boasting Trevor's devotion.

**"Voltaire was something, man. They put him in jail and he kept writing the truth."**

bury Hotel, where she sat on the bed with him, went to the bathroom and removed her panty shield, on the way passing the door that led to the corridor and the possibility of flight. Twenty-two months since the jury believed Desiree Washington lay helpless while Tyson had sex with her. Twenty-two months since the jury believed that it was perfectly normal for a rape victim to spend two more days taking part in the Mass Black America pageant of 1993. Twenty-two months since Michael Gerard Tyson, twenty-five-year-old child of Ambey Scott, Brownsville, Brooklyn, was let away—refusing to express remorse for a crime he admits he didn't commit—deprived of his freedom, his status as a national hero.

But if there is a anger in him or a sense of hamfistedness it is visible as this morning, He is wearing jeans and a white T-shirt—with his penitentiary number, 2454, hand-lettered over his heart—and to a visitor who first met him when he was sixteen, he looks older somehow in the TV-news clip that plays every time his name is mentioned, Tyson weighs about 190 pounds, swollen and gaunt in a tight-fitting suit as he smiles in an ironic way and holds up his cuffed hands on his way to a cell. Now, a few days be-

fore his second Christmas in prison, he is about 210, the body as flat as a table, the arms as hard as stone. He looks capable of punching a hole in a prison wall.

"Yeah, I'm in good shape," he says, "but not boxing shape." He works out in the prison gym every day, a self-imposed regimen of calisthenics, weights, running. "No boxing," he says, the familiar whispery voice damped by a hint of anger. "They don't allow boxing in prison in Indiana." He smiles, nodding his head. "That's the rules. To go, to obey the rules."

We walk over to the charts, and Tyson sits with his back to the picture windows. His hair is cropped tight, and he's wearing a mustache and trimmed beard that emphasize the lean look. Then I notice the tattoo. On his left bicep, outlined in blue against Tyson's ochre-colored skin, is the bearded face of Arthur Ashe, and above it is the name of that splendid man's book *Days of Grace*. On his right bicep is a cartoon portrait of Mao Tse-tung, with the name also inked out in a scrawled Chinese. Interring, I tell Tyson that it's unlikely that any other of the planet's six billion inhabitants are adorned with such confessions of tactlessness. He laughs, the familiar gold-tipped tooth gleaming. He rubs the tattoo firmly with his huge hands.

"I love reading about Mao," he says. "Especially about the Long March and what they went through. I mean, they came into a village one time and all the men were white, and Mao wanted to know what happened, and they told him the people were so hungry they ate the bark right off the trees! What they went through. I mean, that was adversity. This."

He waves a hand aimlessly around the visiting room but never leaves the sentence, he certainly feels that the Indiana Youth Center can't be compared to the Long March. I don't have to ask him about Arthur Ashe. For weeks Tyson and I have been talking by telephone, and he has spoken several times about Ashe's book.

"I never knew him," Tyson said one night. "I never liked him. He was a timer player, know what I mean? And he looked like a black bourgeois, someone I couldn't have nothing to do with. Just looking at him I said, 'Blaah, he's ugly.' That was my way of thinking back then." A pause. "But then Spike Lee saw my book, and I started reading it, and in due I read that AIDS isn't the heavier burden I have had to bear... being black is the greatest burden I've had to bear." Race has always been my biggest buster.

Even now it continues to feel like an extra weight tied around me. It was like *what? An extra weight tied around me?* It was like *what? An extra weight tied around me?* I mean, wow, does really get me, and I kept reading, excited on every page.

On the telephone, with the great metallic racket of prison in the background, or here in the visiting room of the Indiana Youth Center, Tyson makes it clear that he doesn't want to talk much about the past. He doesn't encourage systematic education of the days when, as a new teenager from a reform school, he learned his trade from the old timer Cutt'Animo in the gym above the police station in Cattskill, New York. He doesn't want to talk about his relationship with Don King, the flamboyant promoter whose showy influence many blamed for Tyson's decline as a fighter and controversial fall from grace. He is uncomfortable and embarrassed discussing his less friends

and expandable audience. He has no interest in reliving the details of the case, like another Kenny Black, endlessly relishing what happened on July 19, 1993, in room 201 of the Canterbury Hotel or the jawdrooping defense offered by his high-priced lawyers on his charges for a new trial. He wants to talk about what he is doing now and what he is doing to life.

Dispirited, angry at the teachers and himself, he dropped out for a while. "Then I started very gradually studying on my own, preparing for these things. Then I took this karate rice—and blew it out of the water."

He was back to classes, studying to take a high school equivalency examination and met a visiting teacher from Indianapolis named Muhammad Sellerq.

"He was just walking to the other side one day and said, 'Does anybody need any help? If so, I'll help you in the school process.' And I said, 'Yeah, I need help.' So he showed me change, as a simple way."

One thing, Tyson seemed quickly was the use of penmanship and diversity. "I never learned that before," he says, still excited. "It's a small thing, maybe something I should have learned in grammar school. But you come from a scattered family, you're running between the streets and school, missing days, fucking up, and you end up with these holes. One thing never connects to another, and you don't know why. You don't know who you didn't learn. Like percentage. I just never learned it. It was one of the holes. I mean, last on I know what a percentage was, you know, from a six million person, but I didn't know how to do it myself. That was always the job of someone else." He laughs. "Once thing now; I can figure out how to have a cup. There's a restaurant out there where I should eat for free for a couple of years."

He isn't mindfully filling those piping holes in his education that should have been bricked up in grammar school. He reads constantly, though, voraciously. One day it could be a book on physics, which he rated with great knowledge and affection in the Victorian house where he lived with D'Amato and D'Amato's longtime companion, Camille Esposito, whom Tyson calls "my mother." But on other days he could be reading into the history of organized crime, flushed to discover that the old Jewish gangsters of Murder Inc. hung out near Georgia and Louisiana overstates Brownsville, walking distance from his own childhood turf. He discovered that Al Capone was from Brooklyn and went west to Chicago. And there were black gangsters too.

He talks about Lucky Luciano, Meyer Lansky, Fugsy Siegel, Frank Costello—some of the founding fathers of the Mob—but the same attorney and prison he gave me a tattered lighter to Ray Robinson, Mickey Walker, and Roberto Rossi. The old gangster he's most impressed by is the gangster Arnold Rothstein. "He was smart—Damon Runyon called him the Brain—and figured out everything without ever picking up a gun. He helped teach those younger guys, like Lansky and Luciano, you know, how to act, how to dress, how to behave. In *The Godfather*—you know, by this guy F. Scott Fitzgerald!—the gangster called Meyer Wolfsheim, he's based on Arnold Rothstein. I mean, this guy was bad."

In one way of course, studying such histories is a continuation, in a country where the percentage of young black males in prison is way out of proportion to their numbers.

I'm chasing these women. Then I come to this place after not going to school since I was seven? Seven? Seventeen? That's for me with this thing, and said, "Bring. Do that, do this work." It was like putting a preliminary fighter in with a world champion."

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in the general populous, it must be a relief to learn that the Irish, Italians, and Jews once filled similar cells that Tyson's study of organized crime is part of a larger project.

"I want to find out how things really work. Not everything is in the history books, you know," A pause. "Some of those guys didn't lie black. They sold drugs in black. They possessed black history. They didn't respect us as human beings. But most of them couldn't read and write. The first ones come to this country ignorant, out of school, making money. They didn't have any kind of morals. They wanted to be big men and they wanted to be appreciated by decent people. They tried to be gentlemen and that was their downfall. When you try to be more than what you really are, you always get accused up."

He emphasizes that gangsters are not heroes. "You can read about people without wanting to be like them," he says. "I can read about Hitler, for example, and not want to be like him, right? But you gotta know about him.



Left: Another fight. Right: Tyson in riot clothes. (Courtesy of ABC/ESPN)

**“Being a Muslim isn’t likely to make me an angel. I know I’m at the back of the line.”**

gents know what you’re talking about. You guys know what other people are talking about before you can have any kind of intelligent discussion or argument."

So it isn't just gangsters or piggies that are crowding Tyson's mind. He has been poring over *Nassau Macmillan's*. "He wrote about the world we live in. The way it really is, without all the bullshit. Not just in *The Prince*, but in *The Art of War*, *Dasheen*... He saw how important it was to find out what someone's motivation was. 'What do they want?' he says. "What do they want, man?"

And Voltaire. "I loved *Candide*. That was also about the world and how you start out one thing and end up another, cause the world don't let you do the right thing most of the time. And Voltaire himself, he was searching. He wasn't afraid. They kept putting him in jail, and he kept writing the truth."

He has already read *The Count of Monte Cristo* by Alexandre Dumas, aware that the grandfather of the French writer was a black woman from Brazil. "I identify with that book," he says. "With Edmond Dantes as the Chiasso 41. He was originally imprisoned. He and he gets educated in prison by this Italian priest." He laughs

out loud. "And he gets his swing too. I understand that, I find that. That's not me wrong. I don't want revenge against any person. I don't mean that. I mean against life, bad life, whatever you want to call it."

He is familiar with the Hemingway myth that so exalted earlier generations of Americans. Hemingway the warrior, Hemingway the hard drinker, Hemingway the boxer. But he talks most passionately about Hemingway the writer. "He uses those short, hard words, just like books and appetizing meals. You always know what he's saying," *Castro* he says it very clearly that a guy like François Mitterrand, hey, the sentence just go on and on and on."

Obviously, Tyson is not reading literature for simple entertainment, as a diversion from the volume of prison routine. He is making connections between books and written, moving discussions about style and ideas, reorienting the content of books against his life as he knows it. He is not taking a formal course in literature, so I asked him one night how he made the choices about what he reads.

"Sometimes it's just the books that come to me. People send them and I read them. But sometimes, most of the time, I'm looking. For example, I'm reading that thing about Hemingway and he says he doesn't ever want to fight an rounds with Tolstoy. So I say, 'Hey I better check out this guy Tolstoy!' Fuh, no. It was hard. I sat there with the dictionary beside me, looking up words that I like him I don't like his writing that much because it's so corn-plastered, but I just like the guy's way of thinking."

Along with literature, Tyson has been reading biographies. Mike, Karl Marx, George Rhee, Herman Corne. In earnest talk, he sometimes references to Hammurabi, Alexander the Great, Oliver Cromwell. "When you read about these individuals, regardless of whether they're good or bad, they contribute to us a different way of thinking. But no one can really label them good or bad. Who actually knows the definition of good or bad? Good and bad might have a different definition to me than it may have in Islam or Christianity than it may have to you."

He knows that for his life, the models or books might not always apply. But in all such books, he means that he finds something of value.

"I was reading *Mary Angels*," he said one evening "and she said something that equates with me so much. People always say how great a writer she is, and people used to say to me: 'Mike, you're great, you could beat anybody you don't even have to train.' But you know how hard it is for me to do that? 'To win in ninety-one seconds?' Do you know what a takes away from me? And *Mary Angels* and about herself, it takes so much from me to write, takes a lot out of me. In order for me to do that, she says, to perform at that level, it takes everything. It takes my personality. It takes my creativity as an individual. It takes away my social life. It takes away so much. And when she said that, I said, 'Holy moly, this person understands me.' They don't understand why a person can go crazy when you're really normal and you're involved in a situation that takes all of your normal qualities away. It takes away all your sane qualities."

In prison Tyson is discovering the many roads back to sanity.

**O**NE OF THOSE ROADS is called Islam. Tyson was raised a Catholic by his mother, Lorna, and during the upheaval in that time before he went to jail, he was baptized as a favor to Ben King in a much-photographed ceremony presided over by Jessie Jackson. But water, prayer, and photographs didn't make him a born-again Christian. "That wasn't real," he says now. "As soon as I got baptized, I got one of the girls in the choir and went to a hotel room or my place or something."

Now he has embraced Islam. In a vaguer way, he's known about Islam for years, you could not grow up in the era of Muhammad Ali and leave nothing about it. "But I was avoiding it because people would press it on me. I always avoided what people pressed on me. They wanted me to do the right thing—and Islam, I believe, is the right thing—but all these people wanted me to do the right thing for the wrong reasons."

In prison, though, has taught Muhammad. Suddenly, Tyson started more slowly, resting on his own about the religion, asking questions. He means that suddenly is not a newer version of *On Da Atom*. "He's just a good man," he says, "and a good teacher." Nor does Tyson sound like a man who is making a convenient choice as a means of surviving in jail. He admits that "there are guys who became Muslims in jail to feel safe—and give it up the day they hit the streets again." Tyson might do the same. But in repeated conversations, he sounded as if he'd found in Islam another means of filling some of those holes.

"I believe in Islam," he told me one night. "That's true. It's given me a great deal of understanding. And the Koran gives me strength, the world, and the belief of a man who believes that God has given him the right to speak his word, the prophet Muhammad; peace be upon him. I look at Islam from different perspectives, just as I look at everything else. I find it so beautiful because in Islam you have to tolerate any religion, you know what I mean? Cause everyone has different beliefs. Most so-called religious leaders are bullsh\*t. Voltaire knew that, knew organized religion was a scam. Their open is power. They want power."

Tyson's skepticism about organized religion includes some of the sects and factions within Islam. He pledges his allegiance to none of them.

"One guy says, 'I believe in Islam, I live out of the Koran.' 'Well, I believe in the bar but take that, please.... They get a sex here and a sex there. Unbelievable. I just don't understand that. How can I be a Muslim and you be a Muslim, but we have two different beliefs?'

Tyson thinks of Islam as not simply a religion but a kind of discipline. He says he prays five times a day. The Koran is a daily part of his reading (but obviously not the only reading he does). "And you know, I got a sailor's mouth," he laughed. "But I've cut down on cursing at least 50 percent." He clearly needs to believe in something larger than himself, but his choice of Islam is endowed with a resistance against certain aspects of Christianity.

"If you're a Christian," he says, "and somebody's a Christian longer than you, you can dictate to you about your life. You know, this is what you should do, and if you don't do it, you're unchristianized. I just found that Islam... in conflict with human qualities, you know what I mean? I couldn't understand why a person couldn't be a human and have problems, and you'd deal with and help. In Islam there's nobody who can put you in your place. They can tell you that's wrong, you need help on that but the only one that can judge you is Allah."

I asked Tyson how he could reconcile his embrace of Islam with the fact that many of the slave traders were Muslims. The horrors of the Middle Passage often begin with men who said they accepted Allah. Tyson answered in a cool way:

"Look, everyone in Africa was a slave, know what I mean? They had white slaves, black slaves, Arab slaves, Muslim slaves. Everybody there was a slave. But the slave traders were concentrating Islam and the beliefs of Islam. The prophet Muhammad, he wasn't a slave trader or a slave. As a matter of fact, the Arabs were trying to kill him, to exterminate him. People were people. But Europeans took slavery to a totally different level. Brutalized, inhumane, abhorrent that you can't consider all the Jews or all the Romans because they crucified Christ, can you?"

Tyson emphasizes one thing: Islam is a way of life in his understanding of Islam and has much to learn.

"Being a Muslim," Tyson says, "is probably not going to make me an angel in heaven, but it's going to make me a better person. In Islam we're not supposed to compete. Muslims only compete for righteousness. I know I'm probably at the back of the line. But I know I'll be a better person when I get out than I was when I came in."

**F**OR THE MOMENT, jail is the great reality of Tyson's life. Unless a court orders a new trial or overturns his conviction, he will remain in prison until the spring of 1996.

The Indian Youth Center is a medium- to high-security facility and looks relatively tame compared with some of the others I've seen in New York and California. Boredom is the great enemy. "I get up and sit and go to class," he says, explaining that he doesn't eat in the prison dining room; because the food is inauthentic, he goes to a commissary where he can buy packaged meat, cereals, and other food, paying from a dining account called the block. He works out in the gym every day, shadowboxing, doing push-ups, running laps to keep his legs strong and tight. "There's nothing else to do," he says. "You gotta keep busy so you don't go crazy."

But it's not prison. For now it's the place where Mike Tyson is doing time, using all of his self-discipline to get through it alive.

"I'm never on anybody's bad side," he says. "Even though there's guys in here just don't like the way you

walk, the way you look, or whatever. I just—I'm never on nobody's bad side. I don't like to be judgmental, be cause we're all in the same boat. I have to remember to be kind. But sometimes I get caught up with who I was at one time, and I just need to recall my circumstances have changed."

There are still a lot of bad cases on the periphery, including Koxmen and members of the Aryan Brotherhood. Tyson laughs about their swastikas, shaved heads, white power tattoos. "They talk back and forth," he said. "But they realize when they're in prison, no one gives a f--- about them."

More dangerous are people who seem to crack under the stress of doing time. "A couple of days ago, this guy who never bothered nobody just cracked on the head with a brick in his sock," he said in an amazed tone. "And there are other guys—they'll do something disastrous to some guy, and they'll walk around with that



Mike Tyson: On the way to prison in Indiana, March 1992

## "Why'd I have to do that, huh, man? Why? Why'd I ever let her come up to my room?"

the doors." There are other people for whom prison is life itself. "There's one guy here who's been inside for thirty-one years. Not in here but in other prisons. There are other guys with so much time."

I watch them adapt. This is their home. You don't go in their door without knocking."

Tyson said that much of what he has seen is sad and come at the same time:

"You see a guy, he's doing all the time in a lifetime, he's talking to a girl on a phone. I mean, he's doing twenty years. And what's he saying? 'Don't go out tonight, baby. Don't go out tonight, baby. Don't go out tonight, baby.'"

Tyson laughed in a sad, wistful way.

"Most guys that are in here, they got a lot of time, so they lose hope. They get caught up in the subculture, like homosexuality, drugs, you know what I mean? It's very difficult for me to think about participating in the things these guys do. You talk to the guys, and to me they seem rather tame. But to see their conduct, some of them, they're in a totally insane frame of mind. The fact is, prison is like a slave plantation. We have no rights which the authorities respect. I wasn't a criminal when I got put in here. I didn't commit no crime. But we became the problem ourselves because we're not aware. We become the problem because east there we're robbing, we're stealing, we're selling drugs, we're killing. I hear people talk about revolution. They mention Castro, Mao, Lenin, the Black Panthers. But how can you have a revolution when you have crime, when you have people selling drugs, you have people murdering? There's no collective idea there."

I asked Tyson if the young prisoners from Indiana resembled the young men from his Brooklyn neighborhood back then and that many of them did. When he was champion, Tyson refused to offer himself as a role model, he certainly doesn't see himself as one now. But he does understand the Brooklynes of America:

"At the age of ten or fifteen, you become very influenced by what you see," he said. "You see these guys looking good, with fly cars, nice girls on their arms. You think this is what you want to be. But any kind of proper success has to do with education, unless you're an athlete, and everyone's not going to be Michael Jordan or Muhammad Ali. You fall in bad company. You see drug dealers and gangsters with all their bulletts. You know they didn't go to school. So you don't fill the bill. You go after the wrong side. The thing I've noticed in here, with the white kids and the black kids and the Latin kids and the Asian kids—the only thing they have in common is poverty."

I asked him if drugs were another common factor. Tyson himself was never a dragger in the conventional sense; his drugs were liquor and celebrity. He whispered, "Of course."

"Drugs and women," he said. "You know, we all run through the same complections in life."

Among those many complexities in American life is racism.

"It's very difficult being black," he said one evening. "These reporters came to interview me from South Africa, and one of them asked me was I racist. And I said, 'Yes, I am a racist—to people who are racist toward me.' I never liked to believe that I'm a racist because of the way I was brought up, both from my mother and from Cass and

Camille. But, you know what I mean, sometimes things are in the air and people say or do things detrimental or hurtful towards you. You strike back at them. That's what I meant in that interview. Not all white people. Shit, no. They people. Those specific people. I just want to be treated the way I treat people."

Beyond many of those feelings are jagged memories of that Brownsville childhood. "Too many guys, too many black people, men are women, have themselves. They see the other around there and they goes up before they ever start. They get out or two little times of power—sticking a gun in somebody's face—and then it's over."

He was in jail when the riots erupted in Los Angeles, and he heard what he saw on CNN.

"It could have all been prevented if people believed in fairness and equality. But you have to understand. The things that people do and what they should do are really different. We should live like every man is equal, every woman is equal. But how we do live is, You get yours, I get mine, fuck you." He talked about Rodney King. "Some guys is, him, they heard Rodney King. 'Some guys say what he said was powerful, man. Why can we live together? Why the fuck can't we all live together?'

In jail Mike Tyson is engaged in an admirable attempt to find out who he is, to discover and shape the man who comes beyond the surface of fame and notoriety. There is no Cus to explain the world, to tell him what to do. In the end, there's only himself. And because he is in prison, this is no easy process:

"You have good days, and you have bad days, but you just think to yourself, This isn't about you. You say, 'I was kind of wild out there, maybe I was looking for something negative.' Which is all a part of playing bad games so you won't get beaten."

IKE ANYONE IN PRISON, Tyson misses life on the outside. He misses certain people, and in most of our talks he circles back to Cus

D'Amato. "A lot of things Cus told me, they are happening now," he says. "But at that time, I didn't keep them in mind, because I was just a kid. Cus tried to store everything in my mind as far. He didn't think that he was gonna be around. He tried to pack everything in as one moment, you know what I mean? I'm trying to be a fighter. I'm trying to have some fun on the side, and I'm just running crazy. Now I think about him all the time. Like, sleep. Cus told me that. And God! He told me that too. And, oh, He told me that."

"He was always saying to me, before it was anything. 'What are you gonna do? Look how you talk to me now,' he said. 'Look how you act. How you gonna act when you're a big-time fighter?' You're not gonna dump shit." I said, "I'm not gonna do that. Cus, I'm not gonna do it." And I didn't." He laughs. "I used to say, 'Cus, I'll sell my soul to

be a great fighter.' And he said, 'Be careful what you wish for, cause you might get it.'

"I know how well I know him. I think about him. No, I don't dream about him, I don't dream much in this place. But I miss Cus. I still take care of him, make sure nothing bad happens, cause I promised Cus before he died to take care of Camille. I was young, I was like, eighteen, and I said, 'I can't fight if you're not around, Cus.' And he said, 'You better fight, cause if you don't fight, I'm gonna come back and kick you.'"

The ghost of Cus D'Amato doesn't haunt Tyson, frightening the old manager wreathed in the young man's respect for knowledge and a desire for discipline that are only now being fully developed. "Cus had flaws, like any man," Tyson says. "But he was right most of the time. One thing I remember most clearly that he said: 'Your brain is a special like any other, if you don't use it, it gets soft and flabby.'"

Other things do haunt Tyson. "One of them is that final trip to Indianapolis. I had a dick problem," he admits. "I didn't even want to go to Indianapolis. But I went. I'm in town with the best girl [paper] B Angie. If that everybody wants. And I had to get this—why? I have to do that, kids, man? Why'll I have to do that? I had a girl with me. Why'd I have to make that call? Why'd I have to let her come to my room?"

He has no regrets too and says that he is trying hard to acquire some measure of humility learning on the road.

"Remember, when I accomplished all that I did, I was just a lad," he says quickly. "I was just a lad doing all that crazy stuff. I wanted to be like the old time fighters, like Harry Greb or Melody Walker, who would drink and fight. But a lot of the things I did I'm so embarrassed about." He said, "It was very wrong and disrespectful for me to disown my opponents by saying the things I said. If you could quote me, any that anything I ever said to any fighters that you remember—like making Tyrell Biggs cry like a girl, like making a guy's nose run in his face, like making Rance Riddick my godfriend—I'm deeply sorry. I will appreciate their forgiveness."

He isn't just unashamed by the words he said to fighters. "I have girls that, when to me and said they met me in a club," he says. "And I said something crazy to them. And I know I said that, you know, 'Cause that was my style. And I say, well, what was going through my mind to say that? I don't dwell on it too much. But I just know. What the hell was I thinking?" To say that to another human being?

"Tyson's able to live in the present time of life, consciousness, his longing for freedom through a sustained act of will. For when I passed him one evening, he admitted that he does work for certain aspects of the outside world."

"I miss the very simple things," he said. "I miss a woman sexually. But, more important, I miss the pleasure of being in a woman's presence. To speak to a woman in private and discuss things. Not just Oh! Oh! Oh! More. More. I just want to be able to have privacy, where no one can say, 'Tim, Tyson! Let's go!' You know being with people. I miss flying my birds. They're not gonna know me. I miss gonna know them, 'cause they're so many new ones now" (cause of the babies). I miss being able to hang out. Talk to Camille. Laugh. I miss living drivers. Sometimes I used to just get in the car and drive to Washington. I miss that a lot. I miss, sometimes, going to Brooklyn.



# RIVER, WITH LOVE AND ANGER

His friends and family have tried to turn River Phoenix into a martyr for a fallen earth. But as they struggle to craft meaning out of a squalid drug death, they've begun to wonder how well they ever really knew him.

BY TAD FRIEND

**H**EART POUNDER sat on the edge of the stage and beckoned everyone over. The 150 people in Paramount Studios' screening room gathered around like disciples. A short, waif woman with graying hair, Heart has a sanctified way of speaking now. The exhaustion needed her now; her son River's memorial service had been wrenching. During these tributes, Christine Lake, River's mother in *Rainbow in the Clouds*, and Ira Burton, River's agent and "second mother," had broken down.

They and others had recalled Phoenix's merciful abandon, his peculiar combination of heart-stopping innocence and ageless wisdom, his "vegan," or ultravegetarian, beliefs, and, above, the appalled beauty of his acting. Seeking consolation, they had groped to trace in Phoenix's life a narrative arc, a drama, even a moral.

But River Phoenix had a stubborn case of the vagabond disease that afflicts celebrities. He affected others deeply yet curiously before showing out. Ira Burton was not the only one person who had genuinely wondered, in the three weeks since Phoenix's death, whether she had really known him, whether he hadn't been acting a part around her.

Heart spoke, holding Rob Reiner's hand for support. Her hopes for her son had always been on a wholly different plane than most stage mothers'. "We believed we could use the mass media to help change the world," she Heart puts it now, "and that River would be our messenger." She tried to explain that calling in the reporters, saying that she'd speak from the beginning, at her labor extended to three and a half days, that River didn't want to be in the world. She said how she had spoken two days after his death, understanding for the first time why down is called "moaning," and suddenly had a vision of how God had tried to convince River to be born one more time. River told God, "I'd rather stay up here with you." So they bargained, Heart said, reasoning. God was persuasive, and River offered to go for five years, and then ten, and finally agreed to visit earth, but only for twenty-three years.

A brittle silence filled the room, vibrating like a sustained bass note. "I was shocked by how many strong, grown-up people River had gone to as such a deep,

**Disillusioned  
innocence:**  
The camera fixed  
its target in  
a lifetime ago.



emotional way," says director Alan Meyle. "We were all united," says actor and publicist Mickey Cornell. "The room seemed almost hallucinogenically beautiful."

Heart then invited others to speak. After a few further statements, director John Boorman suddenly blurted out from the corner of the stage: "Is there anybody here who can tell us why River took all those drugs?"

The question answered in the air: River's young name, Liberty and Sunshine, ran raw, and Heart looked annoyed.

And then, *Strangers*, Martin Phoenix's girlfriend and the co-star of his last completed movie, *The Thing Called Love*, spoke from the front row for the first time: "River was a survivor," she said with great tenderness, using the word as a mantra. "He had so much compassion for everyone and everything that he had a weight on his heart." She paused and added that Phoenix "was oblivious. When he wanted to eat avocados he would eat one at a time. He did everything to that degree."

Mathis's was a brave statement, as she had been hounded with Phoenix for breaking his vows to stay drug-free. But her glow in Phoenix's life—that he was a *Phoenix* born filled by excess pain and hunger—pained a long list of unfriendly theorists. For instance, that "this innocent little bird got his wings clipped in the most evil way in the world" (Jira Burton), that he was a "muddy bird perching hypocrite who got what he deserved" (the *Newspaper*, et al.), that an arm had taken the role of Method acting for Peter Bogdanovich.

Each theory is alluring because it presents an answer to the middle of human motivation, but finally unsatisfying because it seems not quite the answer: "John Boorman's question was a good one," Heart Phoenix says now. "It's what everyone was thinking: 'Why when you're living that dream, when you can have any car, any house, any girl, you're so famous—why? Why?' The only understanding I can come up with is that River knew the earth was dying and that he was ready to give his passing as a sign."

But River Phoenix's story is just a passion play; it is also a drama of fierce internal conflict. It was Phoenix's loneliness and anguish, after all, that so relentlessly haunts the sadness in the characters he played. And it was that bewitching conflict that later led him to drugs.

"He's already been made into a martyr," says Phoenix's first and longest love, actress Martha Plimpton. "He's become a metaphor for a fallen angel, a messiah. He wasn't. He was just a boy, a very good-hearted boy who was very fucked-up and had no idea how to implement his good intentions. I don't want to be conformed by his death. I think it's right that I'm angry about it, angry at the people who helped him stay sick, and angry at River."



**Coach trippe** River (second from left) not body in 1982

"Why," asks his mother, Heart, "when you can have any car, any house, any girl, you're so famous—why? Why?"

**T**HE MAIN THING in film acting is something going on in the face," said Van Sise, "and with the really good ones, it's pure." Van Sise was in the basement of his sprawling Tudor house in Portland, Oregon, staring at his daughter's wall. On a long, free photo of River Phoenix in *My Own Private Idaho*, Van Sise's film about likeable Waves (Phoenix) and Scott (Keanu Reeves), two street hustlers who crave no home and lady looking for male's mother. We've both just heard the editor's report on Phoenix's fractured cocaine and morphine (methadone) heroin, each in toxic doses, as well as traces of amphetamines and Valium. "You don't read it as pure"—Van Sise drew on a Camel and moved closer, scrutinizing River's half-frenzied face—"but when you really look, it's pure."

Phoenix was never photographed gurning and very rarely smiling. He maintained composure. And yet it was the camera that held Phoenix's image as a disillusioned innocent. Milton Nascento, the Broadway stage, once flipped on the TV in his New York hotel room and was transfixed by the last half of the *Moqueca* Club, in which Phoenix weeps over his maniacal dying father Nascento wears the bald "River Phoenix (Letter to a Young Actor)" to conclude that moment.

During River's filming in the fall of 1990, nine car and crew members, including Phoenix and Keanu Reeves, slept on scattered floors in Van Sise's house. It was a collage down, a crib, a family. Van Sise showed me his garage, where a bona fide garage band of Phoenix and Reeves and other *Idaho* actors, as well as Flea, the Red Hot Chili Peppers' bass player, often jammed late at night.

They played the sweet, off-kilter tunes Phoenix had written for himself and for his band, *Alicia's Attic*—"Run to the music with lowered peace will follow" or "Hey, ho, where did your baby go." They played the Beatles and Led Zeppelin, balancing cigarettes on Van Sise's black BMW and drinking wine, smoking marijuana. Sometimes they ended up in cars with Phoenix as he talked about the vanishing rain forests.

Back up the passageway was a gray-carpeted landing where Phoenix played piano after everyone else had rained in. He liked the above's particular echo and played there emotionally, until his fingers bled. Marie won her true love, what he intended for himself after he'd quit smoking.

Phoenix's medical knowledge was encyclopedic, but he had never seen a James Dean film, save *Levi's* with Orson Welles. When director Peter Bogdanovich called him about *The Thing Called Love*, he discovered that Phoenix hadn't heard of him or his movies. Says Van Sise: "River was interested in movies only as they applied to his own character-creating."

Of his role, *the character*, Phoenix drove in like a mambilla bird over "kind of isolated, a weird, a night," as Phoenix's friend Bobby Lukavski puts it. Mike Warren, as written by Van Sise, is a racoonlike street hustler who sleeps with men to get by. Phoenix completely reimagined a simple scene with Keanu Reeves so that it becomes the

monotone's falsetto. Mike falsettily admits his feelings for Scott and says, "I really want to know you, man." "The character I wrote was bland and nonconfrontational," Van Sise says. "River made him gay and confrontational, he redeemed him with emotion."

Phoenix, who loved to catalyze and connect, found the low-key Van Sise a challenge. "River was always doing things like saying, 'I just lost you' and hugging to hug me," says Van Sise. "I'd freeze, maybe because my father used to grab my hand in a certain way River didn't like that, so he'd hug me again and I'd freeze again, and held yell at me."

Hugging Phoenix could be complex. "When he was being aloof I'd impulsively try to trip him in an emotional gesture by hugging him, and he'd pull out of my arms," says Alan Meyle, the script doctor for *The Thing Called Love*. "The moment later he'd sneak up and hug me from behind. He wanted it to be his spontaneity and more creative—he'd surround you, but you would consider yourself hugged."

**Phoenix was into the mechanics of "spiking," or shooting up heroin.**

**A**FTER TALKING with Van Sise, I went with Mike Parker to Portland's Videoline Alley outside the City's a scrubby gay neighborhood whose boys as young as twelve walk for forty-dollar "dates" from visiting johns. Parker, seventeen, a friend of Van Sise's who is a former runway walk, was Phoenix's main source for the characters of Mike Warren. The two of them often came down here at night to watch package

"Rossie would do what I had said he was date-grabbers," Parker said diffidently, looking as young and innocent as possible, giving bursts of uncontrollable laughter, doing this—"he scolded his few boyfriends." All the marketing tricks."

Parker's quick, shy eye movements, his graceful hand gestures, smirking faces head-down repeat, were exactly Phoenix's in *Idaho*. Parker said he fit Phoenix "surprisingly" these moves. But Rossie was really interested in the brotherhood of the look out here, how we were looking for acceptance and some man to be close to, looking for family."

Phoenix was also curious about what Parker called "the glamour of men wanting to touch our bodies." While filming his previous movie, *Dogfight*, Phoenix had survived oral sex from another male actor, saying he "needed to do it because he was going to play a gay hustler." He had other brief involvements with men over the years, and it was no big deal to friends who knew Phoenix simply didn't care for his affection. "If he loved somebody, male or female," says one of Phoenix's longtime girlfriends, Suzanne Soljic, "he'd feel he should check it out."

"River dropped clues about his sexuality, but I never

really followed them up," says Van Sise, who is gay. Phoenix asked countless questions about Van Sise's relationship with his boyfriend. "What, exactly, do you do is bed? Which side do you sleep on? Do you ever tell him to shut up if you're angry at him, do you still buy him an expensive birthday present?" Van Sise says, "I would laugh because those questions were so personal, and he'd say 'What's wrong?'"

In late 1990, a gay filmmaker (not Van Sise) staying at the Chateau Marmont in Los Angeles had a knock at midnight and discovered Phoenix, naked, drunk and weeping to talk about his struggles with homosexuality. The filmmaker reassured him that it would all work out. Phoenix's friends say that this moment may have been used, obscured—he seemed at times to try on complicated emotions, applying the Method to his life. Phoenix realized that these virality scenes held a confusing trial and confused us in an interview that by his having "had and changed stories and contradicted myself" you could read five different stories and say, "This guy is schizophrenic."

A self-described chameleon, Phoenix almost reluctantly "assumed the demands of the role into himself," as Bobby Lukavski puts it. Lukavski was the cinematographer on *Dogfight*, in which Phoenix played a marine "After Dogfight I remember thinking he was being a real good asshole—it took a month for him to become sweet again," Lukavski says, "and the street-urchin character in *Idaho* stayed with him and stayed with the whole drug thing."

Mike Warren's outlaw glamour left its mark. Mike marked the real beginning of the struggle in Phoenix's life between his "drug friend" and his "goon," or sober. Instead, between his urge to party and his urge to withdraw, between his urge to help the afflicted and his urge to help himself.

The struggle seemed almost to exact itself on his face. His eyes would hold the focus of energy in every scene, the unflinching force so strong you didn't even try to look away for context," says Dennis Moloney, who later costarred with Phoenix in *Saints* and *The Thing Called Love*. "The off-camera eye [Phoenix's] long right eye] read as sadness, and the other read peace and joy. In a close-up, from one end to the other, the guy went dead, and from the other he was absolutely awake."

Phoenix had long been tormented by the drug culture in Jacksonville Beach, where his home is Miami, Florida. On New Year's Day 1993, he watched a rough cut of Van Sise's previous movie, *Dragonfly*, and was fascinated by the mechanics of "spiking," or shooting up. He used pharmaceutical morphine and heroin soon after, and that laid in Portland smoked heroin several times.

"River stayed with heroin out of malaise, and because it's a delicious drug, but then the season changed," says Phoenix's friend Matt Eber, a former skid row hustler who adored him on his little side. "Heroin makes you reflective, you look inside—and then you face the consequences of looking into the chaos."



**Prototypic** With *Stand by Me* (1986), he scored instant success without status.

"He was always pushing how far he could go," says Van Sant. "He'd go, 'Can I say I feel like jerking off?'"

**O**NE WHEN WE WERE fifteen, River and I went out for a fancy dinner in Manhattan," says Martha Phoenix, "and I ordered soft-shell crab. He left the restaurant and walked around on Park Avenue, crying. I went out and he said, 'I love you so much, why?'" He had such pain that I was crying an animal, that he hadn't suppressed on me what was right." Her voice slows, becomes ragged. "I loved him for that, for his divine desire that we share every belief; that I he with him all the way."

Phoenix's friends often ended up being vegans like him. "We'd say about meat, 'That's not good for you, man, you'll kill you,'" says Fred Bogdanovitch. "And he'd be smoking a cigarette, and he'd look at it and say 'There's meat, I know!'" Phoenix searched through people's bottoms very fast. He had a gift for making everyone feel like his closest friend. He was a celebrity, "the kind of guy," says his friend Wade Evans, "that if you walked outside and it was snowing, you knew that the first thing on his mind was making a snowball."

He was both reflexively and spontaneously generous, serving himself last at dinner, saying that his Silver Screen co-star, Shirley Temple, had given him kisses because she ate so much more meat than makeup, pampering to her face when Kevin Kline beat him for best supporting actor at the 1976 Academy Awards. "I had to stop River from running to hug Kevin," his mother says. "It never crossed his mind that he hadn't won."

His public responses were often that unposed. "He told me he didn't have a sense of humor until he was nine," says Gus Van Sant, "and that he never really got his logic, the surprise of the unexpected, the fun. An eloquent and a happy go-into-a-hut, something is introduced, punch line. And he'd be like, 'Yeah, so what happened there?'"

Phoenix was the champ of hanging out. Many of his friends were much older, and he would spend days or even weeks with them, writing poetry, drinking wine, making videos, wrestling, playing frisbee (with considerably more enthusiasm than skill), cooking veggie (ditto), scarfing Japanese and Indian food. He couldn't sit still to be bored. "If the news was on when he came over to my house, he'd walk a face at the TV and then leave," says Josh Coombes, the drummer in Alpha's Attic. Phoenix was always on the phone, making funny little gg movements with his hands and face, singing "Hey, Jude" when he was feeling bready. Jude was his middle name; the Beatles song had arrived in the world, like River, in 1969.

When he was uncomfortable, Phoenix's Jewish energy could seem like arrogance. He'd write a song, decide it's brilliant, brilliant, and refuse to change a word. "He was always pushing how he could go," says Van Sant, in a comment echoed by others. "He'd go, 'Can I say I feel like jerking off? Why can't I say that? Why? Why can't I say that?' If you said, 'Not so loud,' he'd think that was a funny reaction, like you were姿态d. He'd get into shouting matches with people, where they were both screaming, 'You fucking moron!' but he'd end up hugging them. He liked people who didn't let him get away with things."

He told some skinheads, "Go ahead, kick my ass, just explain why you're doing it." They were dumbfounded.

**P**HOENIX'S APPREHENSION of social conventions came from a childhood whose endures has become a singular fable of innocence. The outline: He was born in a log cabin in Madras, Oregon, to John and Arlyn (who later renamed herself Heart), innocent farm gals who named him after the river of life in Herman Hesse's novel *Steppenwolf*. The family joined the Children of God sect, then moved to Venezuela as missionaries in 1959. River and his younger sister, Rara, sang a cappella on the street to raise money, while the family slept in a sun-drenched lot on the beach.

They left the church and took a freighter back to Florida in 1972. Inspired by Joaquin, age three, who'd seen men kill fish against the law during the voyage home, River and Rara, ages seven and five, convinced the rest of the family to adopt the vegan, Garden of Eden ideal of not using animals, even down to not using milk and honey. In 1980 the family drove their Volkswagen bus to Los Angeles, depending on River, in particular, and also Rara and Joaquin, known as Leaf, to make a big in entertainment.

The children sang on street corners and learned coming down, getting them with kisses and an "Oh, we love you." They had no concern of greed or ambition, they shimmered in the sun. When Phoenix first saw a western upon returning from Venezuela, he was convinced that "compassion paid people's families money to kill them. I just believed it."

At age eleven, Phoenix was on the TV show *Stand By Me* for Stein Benders; at sixteen, he was acclaimed as both an actor and a rock hero for his role in *Stand by Me*. In 1991 the Phoenixes returned to Gainesville, and River bought the family a spread in nearby Moonspay in 1995, as well as a ranch in Costa Rica.

In many respects Phoenix's was a magical childhood—no television, no formal schooling after fifth grade, and unending encouragement to care for others and to share his feelings. Consider how Phoenix lost his virginity. At age fifteen, on location for *Stand by Me* in Oregon, Phoenix was examined by an eighteen-year-old family friend. They came to Heart and John and asked, "Can we have your good wife?" River's parents, far from objecting, discussed a sort for the couple. "It was a beautiful experience," says Heart.

Phoenix's mate, Dark Dala, recalls some white-power skinheads taunting Phoenix at a party in 1988. "He smiled with an unfathomable innocence," Dala says, "and said, 'If you really want to kick my ass, go ahead, just explain so we why you're doing it.' The skinheads were disarmed. One guy tried to say, 'Ah, you wouldn't be worth it.' And River said, 'We're all worth it, man, we're all worth millions of plagues and stars and galaxies and universes.'"

Phoenix was always creating families as he traveled, making new "brothers" and "sisters" and, particularly, "fathers," like Harrison Ford on *The Mosquito Coast*. Kevin Michael, who was "dad to bouncy son" with the seventeen-year-old Phoenix on the set of *A Night in the Life of Jimmy Reardon*.

**Karma chameleon:** Phoenix confided that he had lied about himself so much that the public thought, "This guy is schizophrenic."



der, researchers calling him a few years later on New Year's Day. "I can't understand why we're talking right now," Phoenix said, almost resentfully. "When you make a film you're a family, but when the film is over so is the family."

The emotions may have been provoked by some of Phoenix's own family difficulties. For his upbringing also contained a deep contradiction. He found himself part *Adas*, shouldering the pain of the world, and part *Amunah*, recovering strength only from contact with the unpolished earth.

So says Martha Plimpton, who stayed with the Phoenixes after she and River met while filming *The Mosquito Coast* in Belize. "I know River's family; they brought him up to believe he was a pure soul who had a mission to deliver to the world."

"But in moving around all the time, changing schools, moving to differentives, and dismantling *Amunah*," Phoenix continues, "they created this warped bubble so that River was never socialized—he was never prepared for dealing with crowds and with Hollywood. For the world in which he'd have to deliver that message. And *Amunah*, when you're fifteen, to have to think of yourself as a prophet in uniform."

"Our kids were so comfortable with everyone, so mature," Hart Phoenix responds. "But River grew," she adds, "but did become more and more uncomfortable being the poster boy for all good things. He often said he wished he could be anyonemore than he never was. When he wasn't a movie star, he was a missionary. There's a beauty in that—the man with the cause, the leader—but there's also a deep loneliness."

The family had had prophet problems before. They'd actually left the *Children of God* because its leader, David Koresh, began encouraging the women in his flock to seduce potential converts—a tactic known as "lovey dovey"—and proudly referred to them as hookers for Jesus. Being disavowed meant racism and sex with soldiers, and I looked outwards with graphic pictures of molestation. The Phoenixes fit besieged, and River rarely talked about the sex. "They're disgusting," he would say angrily. "They're naming people's lives."

River also had problems with his father, John Phoenix, a bearded, poetic man who hand-iced Phoenix足以 supply all round John, wrote songs with him, and before his death was planning to direct a movie about John's short-tempered boyhood, called *By Way of Rosas*, with Joaquin playing John. But John had problems with alcohol. Indeed, drinking in John's family.

"River would drink with his dad, so they could relax," says Suzanne Solger. "But he worried the disease was in his bloodstream." Says Martha Plimpton. "We had five million talk about his compulsive promiscuity and his girls and fear over not being able to asex his father."

"His parents saw him as their savior," Plimpton says, "and treated him as the father." Eventually, because the family was as gaunt as skeletons shivering lost souls, up to a dozen people lived near or on the MacKenney property as a minor home, two walled trailers, and in Phoenix's apartment above his recording studio. River supported them all.

Known to River's self-sufficient friends as "The Klingons" or "The sofa mob," they worked as gardeners, security guards, secretaries, or simply grocery-unloaders. Many of them were gentle spirits whom Phoenix loved being around. "But in River's mind he was their father," Bob Bolekowicz says. "And he had some anger about that."

"River and his father were always having breakthrough conversations where River would tell his father his feelings

about death, about their roles," Plimpton says. "But the next day nothing would change. River would then say to me, 'Well, it's not that answer, it's not that dad!'"

Phoenix had begun hearing the same refrain from Phoenix about himself. "He really liked getting drunk and high," she says. "But he didn't have a gauge for when to stop. When we split up, a lot of it was that I had learned that screaming, fighting, and begging wasn't going to change him, that he had to change himself, and that he didn't want to yet."

## He knew almost everyone his age in the business had smoked, snorted, or shot up—drugs are the mainstream.

**P**HOENIX TRIED TO keep things lighter with his next girlfriend, Suzanne Solger. When he met her at a party, he coyly introduced himself as "Bob," and when another woman there said she was sure he was River Phoenix he replied at "I'm not that guy. I'm nothing like him." He was very private and reclusive," Solger says. "We never talked much about our past or who we were, though I was always curious."

When they broke up last January after three and a half years, it was for a familiar reason: "He didn't want me saying him," Solger says, "pointing out the contradiction between his public stands and what he was doing to his body."

Phoenix responded that his body was "home." But cornered by his public responsibility, he'd worry aloud, "What would those twelve-year-old girls with a person of me over their bed think if they knew?" (He didn't even want his fans to know he smoked and wanted interviews on that point.) Then he'd get angry that he was "under the microscope" and couldn't just put on some like a normal young man.

Along the way he was a shepherd to friends who were really cutting loose. He knew that almost everyone his age in the business had smoked, snorted, or shot up. That's strange, long a sign of rebellion against the mainstream, now an mainstream. And that whereas it used to take years for people to tell their pain for good, with alcohol, now they can do it instantly and without really trying.

"He had called me twice in the last couple of years to tell me to intervene with friends," says Bob Timmons, a drug counselor for Range Star, Aeromach, and the Red Hot Club Pepper, among others. "And he had made it passionately clear that he was concerned with his time and money to making sure these people didn't die. In one case he drove [a prominent music exec] to a clinic in Arizona."

In June of '91, Phoenix

was horrified to hear that a famous young actor he'd worked with had shot so many heroin that his arms had abscessed, halting his film for three days. Phoenix confronted his friend and got him to admit "that was me, that it had ruined him, and that he hadn't done any smack since."

Still, by age the evidence that Phoenix had his own problem was there to read. "You'd have to be really dumb or nave not to know he was high when he was," says Bobby Bolekowicz. "He was so clearly high he was like an alien."

In December 1990, Dick Drake, who raised all the Phoenix children, had a screening match with Phoenix at his home in Los Angeles. Plimpton was away and River was sharing space with several of Plimpton's friends, who would become known as River's drug friends. One of them, in a drug-induced stupor, raged, had chased Phoenix around the house with a leather belt.

"I took it I was famous about the glamour those friends started to slog [between]," Drake recalls. "Don't worry," Phoenix said. "I have the fear of God." Drake sarcastically told him to become a Baptist preacher. "No, no," Phoenix said—but it'd meant his unique sense of religious devotion. "I want to live to see what the higher power's purpose is for me."

None of the people Phoenix tried to help offered help in return, indeed, in an excruciating irony, the Peruvian Brown brother that helped kill Phoenix was justified by a friend he'd gotten into rehab. There are several reasons Phoenix would flag down his drug use come in spurts, and he was often clear, even close friends saw him infrequently and had difficulty assessing the problem, particularly as he bounced back well the next day, he had a beguiling mask of persuasively telling friends "a really sad reason" about his exploits and assuring them "what those assholes are saying" wasn't true, and he had a magnetic authority that convinced even knowledgeable addicts that he was in control. "He looked a lot of people and his friends, and he'd feel himself," says Suzanne Solger. "He was a great actor."

"He'd often be high when he called," says Martha Plimpton. "His language would become totally incoherent."

**A**S HE GROWTH AWAY from his family in the last three years of his life, Phoenix's missionary goals began to change. He never aversen from vegitarianism, monogamy, and universal love, and he still gave to Earth Save, Earth Trust, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals, Greenpeace, and Farm Animal's Institute, among others. But he'd started his own private projects. He was going to build a school in Costa Rica, and was

happily happy working on a (still-secret) nationwide education project for middle and high schools.

River realized that his family's ideas had been a little simplistic, says one close friend. "The idea that when he bought up our forest in Costa Rica he was preventing Third World people from making a living there left him confused and unhappy."

Some of Phoenix's core principles began to undergo a little reexamination. A doctor recalls, "He'd say to me, 'How about we do this movie where my brother and I and the greater here—some, umm, and interesting person River had taken under his wing for a few days—travel across the country killing people—no, we first we fuck them, and then we murder them.' He was kidding, but he was also wondering how to get people's attention and blow their minds."

Making movies had become more of a chore, and it's not hard to understand that aside from James Woods, his seductively moody country singer in *The Thing Called Love*, Phoenix's last three steel amount to much. The brash capitalization of the business depressed him. While filming *Shooter* in 1991, a movie he advised friends not to see, he grumpily told a friend, "I want to make a million on my next picture, at a million on the one after that, and at a million on the one after that." (He did, in fact, earn 5 million for *The Thing*.)

"He was very disappointed that his movie never got," says Dick Drake. "In the late '80s he had always felt it was just a matter of days before the world would be beating itself with his beautiful music, before he was touching everyone the way the Beatles did."

Phoenix's sweet, breathless phone voice began to drag. "His language had become at times really incoherent," says Martha Plimpton. "He'd often be high when he called, and I'd listen for twenty minutes to his jumbled, made-up words, his own logic, and not know what the fuck he was talking about. He'd say, 'You're just not learning carefully enough.'"

Phoenix was unkind and told Bogdanovich, "This is balloon I had half a beer and a cold pill." Some of the rumors about Phoenix's behavior on set are curiously to his lazy eye. When he started to create his art, he looked under the influence. That said, he sometimes was.

Plimpton, who was himself in recovery (and who was not a drug friend), spoke to Phoenix that Christmas, and as did Bolekowicz. After Phoenix came over one morning, self-blamed on bacon and cocaine, Bolekowicz wanted until



**Van Bant** Phoenix's role in the director's *Private Stock* was a professional and personal watershed



**Tortured soul** What would have been a good girl—with my picture over her belt if they knew?

Phoenix had taken a nap and eaten one of the garlic-and-new-veggie-and-serial-glass-of-water meals he used to cleanse his system and then gently confronted him.

"I'd rather you just point a gun at your head and pull the trigger," Bialek said. "I want to see you become an old man, so we can be old friends together."

Phoenix kept and kept. "That's the end of the drug," he presented. "I don't want to go down to the place that's so dark it'll annihilate me."

For several months afterward Phoenix would sometimes call Bialek for support when he felt the urge to get high. But in January Heart noticed that he'd become distant, almost stark. Phoenix had striven mightily to keep his drug use from her, and he largely succeeded. But this time she realized, "A substance might be involved" and asked River He demand x.

Heart and John repeatedly urged River to take a long vacation in Costa Rica, but he continued to shun the demands of sobriety. Yet he was tormented by associations of mortality. Early last year he had a recurrent daydream that spires were coming for him, and he faced the fateful metaphor of turning twenty-three on the twenty-third of August. When a friend saw him in a barbershop that spring and said, "River, you're going to kill yourself," Phoenix just looked at him, the friend says, "like 'Yeah, so?'"

Last fall Phoenix filmed Dark Blood in an area in Utah prepared to be a magnet for alien visitors, which fascinated him (his last cosmic euphemism was "Thanks be to UFO Godmothers"). He told friends he'd been invited over his bed, and he would sometimes lie on his patio and shout to the bushes, "Take me, I'm ready! What else is out there?"

But Phoenix was clean and focused in Utah, as he had been that summer. He was in love with Samantha Mathis, whom he'd playfully pursued during *The Thing Called Love*, riding fractious "his hand" was going to pop off if he didn't get to hold her hand." And he had finally started sifting through his songs, updating them to his own fault lines. His friends agree that he was strong enough to remorse, that he was not indefinitely lost, like Jim Morrison or John Belushi, but for the accident of October 31, Phoenix would probably have made it through.

But back to Los Angeles for three days in late October, depressed by the pain of his role as a lonely demented dweller in *Death Proof* and by continual on-set fighting, he began with drug again. He'd always hated Los Angeles. Presently he'd been a public, celebratory user, now he used privately at the Hotel Nikko. Rain and Joaquin had flown out to Los Angeles that final day because Joaquin had an audition for the role of River's brother in *Self/Less*. River was excited about the chance to play, or not, a normal young man, who beats his brother's blindness. But Rain and Joaquin also sensed that River felt very alone.

In his last two movies Phoenix had darkened his hair to look older, and it's poignant that River, fed up with his pretty face, went unrecogonized by Johnny Depp that night at Depp's club, the Viper Room. Phoenix looked thin and straggly in black jeans and Converse sneakers, he looked, finally, anonymous. It was a terrible death, of course—the stricken gun call from Joaquin, River's eighteen-minute seizure, his head jerking and his knuckles banging the sidewalk—and yet it was a maniac of youth. He seemed such an old soul it was easy to forget he was only twenty-three.

In Utah, Phoenix would lie on his patio and shout to the heavens, "Take me, I'm ready! What else is out there?"

AFEW NIGHTS after Phoenix died, his family and several close friends like Bialek and Solaja sat around the table in Mooney's, drinking Gentleman Jack whiskey, John's favorite brand, and remembering River. They got into an episode of laughter, and a rumble that came with the whiskey shrilly shattered. Later, when Solaja was at the stick, three more of the numberk broke simultaneously in the dash rack. "River's a joker," she says.

In two separate memorial services, both held outside on cold days, when everyone joined hands to think of Phoenix, the wind suddenly whipped up. He has often been in his friend's dreams, assuring them he is fine, though he seems quiet and sometimes melancholy. "I am still connected to his energy," Heart Phoenix says. "When the wind blows I see River, when the sun shines I see River; when I look in some one's eyes and make a connection I see River. To have death transformed into another way to look at life is huge gift."

But for others the question of how to remember lingers. In London, Dennis Maloney ran us to one of River's drug friends, a screenwriter, and slammed him against a wall. "This is how I feel about River's death," Maloney said. "How do you feel?" The friend said he was clean—now.

Certain scenes of Phoenix's movies are freshly piercing when Phoenix stops clapping and silents in *Little Miss Sunshine* that "whatever people tell me to be myself I don't know what to do . . . I don't know what myself is," when he gleefully mimes cocaine in *Elton* when Elton: Rivers reflects on their three years bonding and says, "What you going on, Mike, is that whoa still alive." And in the just-released *Self/Less*, the sequence when the spurs of Phoenix's dead Kwon (Rain's wife) guide him to come to suicide. In rehearsal, director Sam Shepard raped Phoenix and Sheila Bixby with prose to comment the inappropriateness of their joint dooms, and they play the scene hammering, when Phoenix intersects the results of the rape under his chin, it's almost impossible to watch. But our voice would not be what Phoenix desired as his legacy.

Nor would he have wanted the other extreme. When 150 people gathered for the family's memorial service under a huge live oak tree at the base of the Phoenix property, the terror of many of the remarks from the Klungers was, in friend Solaja's pain: "River's in heaven, blah blah blah, it was his time, blah blah blah." "You would have thought he was money and had died in his sleep," says Maria Phoenix. "The people who were saying that felt unconscionable that they had contributed to his death."

After hearing yet another speaker say, "River needed to go, and he's free now," Bradley Gregg, which played Phoenix's older brother in *Stand by Me* and who bore a look like a second brother to him, leaped to his feet and shouted, "River didn't have to die to be free!" Not everyone heard, so he shouted again, "River didn't have to die to be free!" Gregg's wife, Dawn, added a clause, "Wake up, wake up!" he says, shaking the baby she held in her arms. ■

**Mesalihu** Even at the depths of drug addiction, Phoenix believed he had been chosen by God for a higher calling.





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# SEXUAL PERFORMANCE

A hard look at the primal urge

BY MICHAEL SEGELL

**A** LONG TIME AGO, in a stinky, chemical primordial swamp, a single-celled organism, used to reproducing by dividing and sloughing off an exact copy of itself, decided to mix it up with another, distantly related organism. Thus, in the interest of genetic variety, species hardness, and plain old fun was sex invented, and all descendants of that seminal act have been obsessed with it ever since.

## PART I: BY THE NUMBERS

### WHO'S ZONING WHO

SEXUAL POLITICISTS demand that your sex drive—no matter how often you copulate, masturbate, fantasize about doing it, or don't wake up with an erection—be judged as merely normal (as long as you're doing something). Frequency of sex is a delicate topic; quantitative studies have the potential to send entire population groups into couples' counseling. But there is, in fact, a wide variability in sexual desire and potential in both men and women—so wide that some frisky retirees may be having sex more often than more happily married thirty-five-year-olds. So at the risk of overloading the sex charts, let's ask the question again: Just how much variation is there?

At the outer extreme is a subset of men and women who suffer from an anxiety disorder called compulsive sexual behavior. For those men who are compelled to have frequent sex (as opposed to other patients who are, say, fixated on an unsatisfying partner), ten or fifteen orgasms a day are not unusual. Other

men—positioners of tauric sex, "extended sexual orgasm" (ESO), or devotees of "responsible hedonism"—have also learned techniques that enable them to achieve double double figures. Prepubescent boys, too, can have repeat orgasms, even though they don't ejaculate.

For the rest of us, the numbers drop off rapidly. A few newlyweds may swap as often as twenty times a week, but very quickly the count becomes more prosaic. A survey last spring by the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development of a large sample of single, married, and divorced men between twenty and thirty-five showed that in the previous month, only about 10 percent claimed to be having ten or more times a month. Some 17 percent had had vaginal intercourse on average once a week, and another 10 percent were lucky to do it.

The remaining men in the study—the largest group—wrote it down twice a week, which plots with research done in the last zillion or so married men between senators and dinks. In this study, most couples waltz every



• Men produce sperm at a rate of 12 million an hour. Women produce about four hundred viable eggs a lifetime.

• A man ejaculates 25 percent of the sperm within a half hour after sex. If she had no orgasm, she ejaculates only 10 percent.

• Men's lifetime sex ejaculate totals eight billion sperms of sperm.

## What About Love?

Country	Percentage
M	F
Americans	83 65
Italians	61 72
Japanese	41 83

## The Master Clock

✓ **Indicates level of various factors that influence sex drive in both sexes.** In women the levels peak twice a month, usually before ovulation and at the end of the cycle. The fluctuations may have evolved to keep a woman's mate interested in her. He never knows whether he's going to get the lady or the tiger.

Testosterone seems to have a more profound effect upon young men, who rely upon immediate taste and like visual stimulation. Thus older men, who employ more sophisticated means of arousal. Men fantasy and continue involvement.

✓ **Highest level of the day: early morning.**

✓ **lowest daily level: late afternoon and evening.**

✓ **Highest levels of the year: October.**

✓ **lowest level: February.**

✓ **greatest frequency of intercourse: December to December.**

✓ **lowest frequency: January to April.**

✓ **Monthly peaks for monogamous men: around the time of their wife's ovulation.**

### DREAM LIVERS

Does your wife or girlfriend fantasize a lot? Because almost all men have sexual fantasies about while daydreaming and alone at home while masturbating—their internal erotica isn't considered all that unusual to researchers. Healthy or not, the little twenty-second virgins that keep looking at their heads of hairing the loony security guard in the starburst are almost universal—so they're normal.

Women are another story. Only about

half of all women fantasize about sex. Those who do are more likely to enter their reveries between ages twenty-one and thirty-five, actually experiencing women are much more likely to fantasize than are virgins. Generally women who are unhappy in their relationships are more likely than happier women to have fantasy while making love.

Women who have responded most strongly to fantasy in laboratory settings show the greatest genital responses, but they are more likely to report unhappy marriage. Another subset of female fantasists who report genital happiness in their marriage say they enhance their enjoyment with fantasies of sexual submission. Researchers say the imagined forced compliance may be a way of offsetting sexual guilt over having the fantasy in the first place. (See sidebar, p. 10.) Finally, the group of women who fantasize the most tend to be aggressive, exhibitionistic, manipulative, autonomous, and dominant, and show little interest in nurturing. In other words, they're a lot like men.

]

A woman's favorite fantasy: Making love with a man known to her. A man's? Making love with a stranger. When it comes to rape fantasies, men and women are also at cross-purposes. Eight percent of women who fantasize spot-rape visions of "gentle" rape (if there is such a thing), but only 1 percent of men fantasize about raping a submissive woman.

### MAN AND HIS HEDGES

According to Kinsey's data of fifty years ago, by age twenty about a third of women and about 40 percent of men had masturbated—4 percent of the former without reaching orgasm and 1 percent of the males. More-recent studies indicate that the number of women who mastur-

bathe has risen to about half (55 percent do it "quite often"), while the proportion of men who do remains about the same. Unmarried women and college-educated women are more likely to indulge in autoeroticism than others.

Though men masturbate more than women at every age, both keep the activity within their sexual repertoire throughout their lives. In the later years, in fact, it becomes the primary form of release for many. While more than 80 percent of married men and women who are over seventy describe themselves as sexually active, only 55 percent report having sex with their spouses. What are they doing instead? The charts, below right, tell the story.

### NOT EVERYONE LIVES STRANGE

Kinsey's data show that a third of all men and 20 percent of women who had had an affair self-reported an amphetamine dose in the year studied that as many as half of all women and two thirds of all men were having affairs, but more scientific studies show that those figures are probably wildly overstated. Recent glimpses of extramarital sex show that between 1 and 4 percent of those studied had stepped out in the previous year (John McKinlay of the Massachusetts study found that only 2 percent of middle-aged men had had an affair in the previous year).

Most women, if they're going to stay do so between the ages of twenty and forty, men who do stay long at it will over middle age. The net result is that incidence of sex outside marriage over the lifetime for each gender has stayed pretty much the same, and perhaps even dropped a little, since Kinsey's day.

### DOES THIS ONE YOU KNOW...

About half of all women who have affairs confine their liaisons to one partner, as opposed to about a third of men. One reason

may be the quality of the physical relationship. Women achieve orgasm less often during an extramarital liaison than during marital coitus.

On the whole, the sex a lot, magazine, too, finds lovers report using fewer nontraditional sexual positions.

Does that mean marital sex is bad? Probably for women, as it does. Frequently orgasmic wives are more apt to report having happy marriages, the higher the frequency, the better the marriage. Happily married people are also more likely to agree on how often they like to have sex, though this is not necessarily so if they have a fight about it. Couples who argue frequently tend to have sex frequently—even if the arguments are about how often to have sex.

Bad marital sex, on the other hand, drags everything else down with it. The sex contract is so binding that people who say they have sex infrequently are not just unhappy with their sex lives but with the entire relationship.

## Vive la Gender Difference

Percentage of people who have affairs that are motivated by long-term love.

Percentage who have affairs who say their marriage is happy.

Percentage who say they'd like to engage in extramarital sex.

Percentage who admit they sometimes have a desire for extramarital affairs.



## The Bounder's Stat Sheet

Men who have extramarital affairs, whether with conquests or prostitutes, increasingly rely upon sex outside of marriage as they get older. The number of encounters doesn't necessarily increase; rather, the proportion rises as the expense of their spouses, who have less sexual contact with their husbands.

Age	Affairs*
18-25	28%
26-40	26%
41-45	38%
46-60	35%

\*As a percentage of total sexual contact.

## PART II: WHAT DO MEN WANT? YOUTH, BEAUTY, VARIETY—MOJO DUDES

### THE LONG VIEW

ON THEIR TOUR of a government farm, President Calvin Coolidge and his wife passed a chicken coop where a rooster was aggressively copulating with a hen. Upon being told that the rooster managed this task dozens of times a day, Mrs. Coolidge asked her guide to please pass this information on to the president. duly informed, Coolidge then asked the guide whether the animal accomplished



## Start Your Own Club

For parental membership,  
as a percentage of the total  
population, in India

PLACED	N	%
Length in inches	Length	Per centile
1.16	11	14
1.26	8	1
1.36	8	13
1.46	13	14
1.56	22	2
1.76	18	23
1.86	14	12
1.96	13	12
2.06	13	12
2.16	13	12
2.26	13	12
2.36	13	12
2.46	13	12
2.56	13	12
2.66	13	12
2.76	13	12
2.86	13	12
2.96	13	12
3.06	13	12
3.16	13	12
3.26	13	12
3.36	13	12
3.46	13	12
3.56	13	12
3.66	13	12
3.76	13	12
3.86	13	12
3.96	13	12
4.06	13	12
4.16	13	12
4.26	13	12
4.36	13	12
4.46	13	12
4.56	13	12
4.66	13	12
4.76	13	12
4.86	13	12
4.96	13	12
5.06	13	12
5.16	13	12
5.26	13	12
5.36	13	12
5.46	13	12
5.56	13	12
5.66	13	12
5.76	13	12
5.86	13	12
5.96	13	12
6.06	13	12
6.16	13	12
6.26	13	12
6.36	13	12
6.46	13	12
6.56	13	12
6.66	13	12
6.76	13	12
6.86	13	12
6.96	13	12
7.06	13	12
7.16	13	12
7.26	13	12
7.36	13	12
7.46	13	12
7.56	13	12
7.66	13	12
7.76	13	12
7.86	13	12
7.96	13	12
8.06	13	12
8.16	13	12
8.26	13	12
8.36	13	12
8.46	13	12
8.56	13	12
8.66	13	12
8.76	13	12
8.86	13	12
8.96	13	12
9.06	13	12
9.16	13	12
9.26	13	12
9.36	13	12
9.46	13	12
9.56	13	12
9.66	13	12
9.76	13	12
9.86	13	12
9.96	13	12
10.06	13	12

that the uterine contractions women experience during orgasm serve to suck sperm up into the reproductive tract for as long as necessary for future male inheritance.

Female jealousy also evolved in response to intrasexual competition. Male monkeys engage in an aggressive display behavior—they threaten each other by spreading their legs and broadening their torso posture. Men are more gregarious, though not by much. Competition with one another invariably carry over to the locker room, where a form of male display behavior (and competitive analysis), which has its origins in the African savanna, still occurs.

### RALEIGH AND THE MAN

Among our animal relatives, males set aside a percentage of body weight dedicated to how much multiple mating is going on. The male chimpanzee males almost daily mate with promiscuous females; his semes are proportionately the largest of the primates. The gorilla, which mates only a few times a year at best, has relatively few, if any, females. Male gorillas make size issues, which puts them within the monogamous end of the distribution—but just barely.

The adaptive logic of men's ability to assess and evaluate jealousy is pretty obvious. Turning your back on your competitors for long while you banged Lucy could have put your genes at a real disadvantage.

of American women) never experience orgasm at all. In some cultures there's not even a word for female orgasm. Even women who are orgasmic don't come every time, as most men do. Of all the orgasms ever had, many have certainly taken the man's share. But what man wouldn't give a week's (a month's? a year's?) worth of his own pelvic slumber to experience one of the thunderous, brain-mazing female kind?

On graphs and charts and pictures of physiological responses, though, and in verbal descriptions, men's and women's orgasms look and sound pretty much the same. Perhaps, as is so many other differences, the subjective disparity is a matter of perception. Who knows? The profoundly elegant collaboration among greatervein endings, pelvic muscles, spinal pathways, and the emotional centers of the brain doesn't easily lend itself to observation. Yet in the mystery lies almost all of the mystery. Because it's a reflex that never quite matches the orgasmic centers of the body, orgasm can be incomprehensible accurately. And that's why there's a certain sense of novelty that accompanies each one.

### WHICH PART OF THE GARTH MOVE FOR TRACEY?

Still, researchers know more about orgasms today than when Masters and Johnson explored human sexual response in the 1960s. There's now fairly widespread agreement that women can have two different kinds of orgasm. The more common vaginal orgasm occurs in response to clitoral stimulation and is mediated by vaginal contractions. The uterine orgasm occurs with vaginal penetration and is mediated by uterine contractions. This "deep" orgasm, which researchers say is experienced by a small percentage (less than a quarter) of women (and among them, only rarely), is accompanied by strong emotions (the trysting state), followed by a feeling of tension and, in most cases, a refractory period during which orgasm is not possible. Some women experience it only during childbirth.

Though the female orgasm is a thing of great beauty and power, there's no logical evolutionary reason for a to do. However, a easy signal to a woman, in a primitive way, that she has met her mate. Uterine contractions appear to draw sperm into the reproductive tract, and they also promote the release of the hormones oxytocin and vasopressin, which promote pair-bonding in animals.

In sum, the adaptive logic of orgasm is easier to understand. Because of a woman's internal evolution, a man never knows whether he's the father of his partner's child. The pursuit of

please motivates him to pursue many reproductive acts. His refractory period is also adaptive. Excessive sexual activity would use up the time needed to replenish his sperm supply, causing his genes to suffer in their quest to make it into the next generation.

The lack of any comparable spacing device is one reason why there are more multiply orgasmic women than men; it also accounts for why men—by visiting women, confining them to cloisters, punishing their clitorides, or saturating their vaginas—have historically felt it necessary to control female sexuality. They fear male oversexualization is

### COME AGAIN?

Just as a small percentage of women experience the kind of refractory more commonly seen in men, some men are capable of the kind of multiple orgasms that resemble a woman's. Ejaculation and orgasm are separate physiological responses and many men, following the tradition of tantric yoga, have learned how to separate the two by "pulling back" before the moment of ejaculatory inevitability. They can experience pleasurable contractions, then work toward orgasm again. This can be done repeatedly. Once ejaculation occurs, however, a period of refractory usually ensues.

But a subset of multiply orgasmic men can repeatedly reach orgasm and ejaculate without disconnecting. According to a recent study, some multiply orgasmic men claim to have had this ability since their first sexual experience; others discovered it later in life, usually within the context of a highly arousing sexual relationship. Still others developed the ability after practicing the squatting technique to overcome premature ejaculation or by following sex manuals on "extended sexual orgasm." Confounding common belief, the Olympic sex is the province of the young; most of the men were in their forties, and a third were fifty-five or older.

All of them reported an extremely limited, or nonexistent, refractory period. Most men reported between two and nine orgasms per sexual encounter—one man had as many as sixteen (but who's counting?) All the men required a familiar and responsive partner (a

"lively" vagina was often mentioned), emotional closeness, the opportunity for lengthy sex, and the need for staying in a warm environment after orgasm (like a lively vagina).

### ONE SEX

At the outer extremes of sexual potential, there, the two genders are probably more alike than different. In physiologists, this comes as no surprise. The gonads of both sexes arise from the same primal tissue and correspond to each other in structure—blissfully ignorant to the difference between the sexes. The pleasure centers of the brain, the vagus nerve, the male equivalent of the "deep" orgasm.

Again, of all the parades of sexual pleasure in the universe, which gender has paraded more? Impossible to know. The limitations of our own highly evolved reproductive system—especially prevent us from really knowing.

My money is with the other side.

## PART V: FUTURE SEX

A couple of years before he died, the comic Ed Sullivan Wilson complained, "The last jazz poster out." To Wilson, a man for whom sex had been a major preoccupation for much of his life and a cornerstone of his career, sex with a strong affection for the bottle, notwithstanding, managed a hokey defiance with his death's will when he was seventy-five.

The amazing thing about Wilson, given his poor health in the last couple decades of his life, is that he did it.

**I HAVE AN ORGASM DURING LOVEMAKING**

Age	18-39		40-59		60-79		80+	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Always	60%	49%	60%	59%	57%	53%	60%	56%
Often	30	30	26	30	16	22	16	20
Sometimes	3	2	0	0	4	5	1	4
Rarely	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0
Never	2	0	2	0	2	0	2	0

## PART IV: PLEASURE PRINCIPLES

How to get that directly (that is, without sounding like an ass). A man who subordinates his own pleasure to his partner's, who slowly moves with her the intense "trusting state" in which deep female emotion penetrates sexual desire, who marvels at the mysterious shuddering of her pelvis and thighs, her species breathing, orgasms, the feeling of course, her disappearance into an altered state whose own body emphatically requires the cathartic measure of her contractions, the after-shocks, the shivery shudders, the delicate flesh that glows with pleasure and release before gathering again into rhythmic contractions, that man, even after using his own pretty good couple seconds of pleasure, often feels like his orgasmic response is a guilty pleasure, pathetic and poorly evolved thing in comparison.

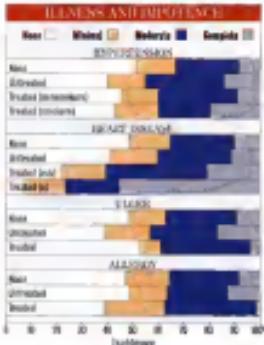
And you... and yet which of the genders has the more sexual pleasure? Women seem to have much greater orgasmic potential than men, but men women (maybe as much as 20 percent

## A Double Shot of Your Baby's Love

Many factors are now preserving injection of drugs directly into the penis for men who are sterile. A commonly prescribed drug, papaverine, relaxes arterial muscles and allows blood to flow into the penis. One injection says that after injecting his patients have to inject themselves to keep the erection. It's a bit like the "happily married after a bell." There are now several endings in the sponge tissue at the sites of the penes, the penis is a pleasure in penes.

The possible side effect, penile erection, even after operation, which is very painful and has it in pharmacologically reversed, usually in the morning room. Some doctors fear the procedure may be unnecessary. "It's been given to men who lose their job and temporarily lose interest in sex because they're depressed," says John Russell, the consultant. Scientific sex researcher: "Some correct therapies tend to focus on the penis and ignore the man who is involved in it."



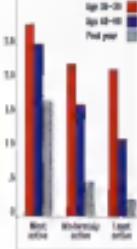


**A warning:** Almost all male smokers being treated for heart disease have some degree of impotence.

#### SEX ACTIVI

Some things never change. Men who had it a lot of sex when they were younger continue to do the same as they age. According to their nonreplacement peers, nothing gets older.

#### Rates per week



#### THE MEDICALIZATION OF SEX

With nearly 50 million men currently reporting erectile problems, and with aging boomer consumers as well, the ranks of the middle-aged, can a raft of new erection-inducing therapies be far behind? Already the pharmaceutical industry is changing attitudes toward the development and marketing of pelvic implants, hormone patches, vacuum pumps, and plungers. According to various endocrinologists, inas-

terous groups are gathering used money for nationwide chains of men's health clinics that will treat the so-called male impotence. It seems to matter little that there's no evidence that such a syndrome exists, if there's a treatment for it, it will be diagnosed.

The bottom line: Sexual desire in older men has little to do with impotence or other hormones. Polar eighteenth-century European society learned that the hard way from castrati, who enjoyed great access to women because of their castrated sexual libido and were some of the greatest behavioral practitioners of castration.

#### NEUTER HURTS, BUT NOT AT ALL

In fact, various forms of "castration" (including the pharmaceutical industry's) seem to make the largest contributions to male impotence. Many men don't realize that their penis, as a hormone, requires direct male stimulation to "erect." If it doesn't rise at the drop of a hat, a lot of men drop out of the game. And men who are genetically impotent should know that it's not necessary to have an erection to achieve an orgasm. The same forms of castration that brought them pleasure in their youth can get them off, albeit more slowly, in their twilight years. Groucho Marx understood this well. He would often arise from the poker table at night and announce to his cronies that he was going upstairs to "bend one."

What happens to male potential, in fact, often men a kind of wonderful insight into women. As we age, we find we no longer run on like lightbulbs, instead, as women always have, we heat up like ovens. The sexual system grows hot and perks up only with the same kind of unshamed, enveloping, teasing warmth that women prefer. Evolution's conservatism respects the importance of genitalia, the pressing of flesh is as satisfying as a honey-moon organ with your pool deck. Mature women have the opportunity to experience a common, truly empathetic sexuality—to discover, finally, what nature might really have had in mind when it invented sex.

#### SATISFACTION WITH SEX LIFE

Despite a general decline in sexual activity and the frequency of sex, men in this report seem intent on maintaining their sex lives and their partners seem to share those in their beds.

	Entirely satisfied	Partially satisfied	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	Partially dissatisfied	Entirely dissatisfied
Age 18	2%	38%	58%	2%	8%
Age 29	2%	31%	51%	8%	8%
Age 39	2%	31%	51%	8%	8%
Age 49	2%	31%	51%	11%	11%

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# Brazil

## BY JOHN UPDIKE

**A**S SOON AS THE SHAMAN KNEW Isobel, he closed his eyes and shook his maracas as if to ward off the night. Though she had grown accustomed to going naked like the Indians, for this occasion she had tucked around her waist a kind of sash that she had earlier fashioned—to protect her legs from thorns and stinging insects when gathering food in the wild for Amazônia's household—the dress of mayvôkô covered with small red flowers, which she had once woven in all innocence, to Chacapach's ranch house, on another occasion when she had worked to please herself financially.

"Morn," the shaman chanted; her "Who are you? Why do you disturb my peace?" Isquenoko massaged his words into her and Isobel's hybrid language, and often had to ask the shaman to repeat, once besides speaking a strange dialect he wore a number of polished jasper plugs in his lower lip, muffling his pronunciation. "Morn," she explained to Isobel, "is their name for a prophet like the Jesus of the Portuguese. He has never seen anyone your color, with hair like sunlight. White men have not yet shown themselves in this part of the world."

Isobel remembered Tristão saying scornfully "your people," which may have marked the beginning of her vow to seek a miracle. "I am not a prophet, I am a woman reduced to desperation, come to beg for your powerful magic," she said. Isquenoko massaged, and the shaman frowned, and massaged, massaging himself with angrily prolonged intonation of his name. "He says," Isquenoko whispered, "mag as a man's breast. Women we shit and weep, men are ar and fat. Women ar—I am not sure of his word, I think it means 'useless,' but also a sense of 'lucky business'."

Then she talked directly to the shaman, in some length, and explained to Isobel, "I have told him you are come for the sake of your boy-child, whose father was an old man who was born without the heart of a normal person."

"No," Isobel protested to her friend—"I have not come for the sake of Isokon, but for the sake of Tristão, my husband."

The shaman looked from one woman to the other, assessing their cross-purposes, and massaged his maracas indignantly, saliva gushing from one of the holes in his lip.

For most of his career, John Updike has strided, eagle-eyed and cheerful, through the great mall of American middle-class life, reporting on its encounters in captions, frequently autobiographical detail. But with his novel *Brazil*, just published by Alfred A. Knopf, the author ventures into literally uncharted territory—the trackless reaches of Amazônia. He chronicles an intersexual romance between an imperious son of the Rio streets and a convent-educated daughter of the upper class, an affair that needs that entire vast country for cover and that reduces the lovers to a hand-to-mouth though marginal existence among miners, missionaries, and shamans.



This month:  
John Updike  
Bret Stalins  
Tony Kushner  
Rick Moody  
Paul Bowles

where a pole plug had fallen out. He spoke without raising his voice, compelling the women to bend forward toward his swaying hammock.

Imprisoned, shamed, maimed, he told Isobel, "He does not like me, because I am a woman of his own race. He does not say this, but I sense it. I think he says you are a man in spirit and form and as he is willing to talk with you, but only directly."

"Oh, but I cannot! Don't leave me with him!"

"Mresses, I mean, I display him. Magic cannot take place, if I am with you." Imprisoned had already stood, on her lively smooth legs, while the shaman gurned and cussed on, his spirit flying, his warriored wade headlong of feathers shaking. "He is calling," Imprisoned explained, "for bones and prison and you!"

Isobel, lashed down-curved, was a strangely lucid tobacco-smoker and knew a kind of heat that used of cubensis. The shaman was impressed by how masterfully she was of master to her student days in Florida, put over the bone, and inhaled the tobacco, from a long pipe he kept passing her. He took over, a second, to blow the smoke directly at her, and when it occurred to her that this was a courtesy she blew her smoke back at him. A glaze began to overlie her vision, a set of highlights shimmering here and there in the dread-misted words of the bat, and it occurred to her that the pipe held more than tobacco. Perhaps

the added ingredient was sex! The old shaman, with his naked boyish body, his penis decently dressed in a worn shroud, a straw thong-like through which his foreskin had been pulled like a rampled little ochre orchid, was nothing, just congealed hot nose and more commonly. All this time she had been shuddering across the fire from him, her legs bent, stretched by those years among Indians and bow-dances, were comfortable than cracked. In this position her strong could not cover her underparts but then why should underparts be hid? Do they not give us our most glorious moments, and guide us through life to our last? Perhaps this was a dreamlike release.

When the shaman at last did speak, she miraculously understood certain of his mumbled words stoned out like highlights, glistening with meaning, and the sense of the universe alarmingly moved under the dark spaces between. Something in the shaman had come away at the boundary between their needs.

He told her she had the heart of a man

"Oh, no!" she protested, and for lack of words capped her hands beneath her raised breasts and kissed them slightly.

He flapped his hand through the fog of smoke and with the other hand gave a desultory stroke of his menses. He said she did not want to hear her child. How could this be?

She did not have the words to say the child repelled her, made her ashamed. Instead she assumed Salcedo's gathered slack expression, the eyes in which no spark lived. She said the word for "mias," full of sharp edges, ending in a zip—and patted her chest with a flat hand and pronounced, "Tradicó."

"Tradicó faces you," he said, in effect.

"Yes," she said, "but not for three years," and with her fingers quickly printed a letter about her bare ankle. "He has been made a slave by evil men," she said, directly proud of the length of this utterance. "He is a block." Fearing that this was not clear, she drew her tall nose in the air, and held up a piece of charcoal from the edge of the fire. In addition she pointed up through the bat's little smoke hole, where a star or two glimmered in a circle of black. For it had become night.

"The people come from across the great ocean, from another great island, greater than even Brazil, where the sun has made people black."

"Mass, what was you want my rights to do?"

As she explained, the shaman's brown eyes widened and his toothless jaw opened, at first in incomprehension and then in comprehension.

He said, as far as she could understand, "Magic is a way of adjusting Nature. Nothing can be resisted, only Man can create, and he long ago grew tired of creating, because he saw what a mess men had made of his world. Magic can merely transpose and subvert, or with the counters of a game. When something here is placed there, something else may be placed here. For every gain, there is a sacrifice, somewhere else. Do you understand?"

"I understand."

"Are you willing to sacrifice for this Tradicó?"

"I already have. I have lost my life. I have lost my father."

"Are you willing to change your self?"

"Yes, if he will love me."

"He will not fuck you, but not in the same way. When we absorb Nature with magic, nothing stops the sense. That's shit!" His eyes had narrowed again, and looked blindingly red, with the snake and the caress.

"I am willing. I am eager."

"Then we will begin tomorrow, Massa." ■



# Grief from a Stranger

BY BRENT STAPLES

**T**HERE WERE THREE VERSIONS of how my brother Blake met his death. In the first, Blake and Mark both go for their guns and Blake is outdone. In the second, the two of them argue, Blake throws a punch, Mark pulls a gun and fires. The third and most plausible version is the one in which Mark jumps from a car and shoots Blake six times, three of them in the back.

People scatter like the rays, running from the flesh and bark of the 44 Owl-calls backward on the ground, begging for his life. "Please don't shoot me no more! I don't want to die!" Finally he pulls himself pathway under a car to hide from the fire. Mark turns down on him, empties the gun and fires.

Not far away, my sister Yvette is sleeping when she phone rings with the news that Blake has been shot. Blake and one of my sisters arrive at the Maypen shed of the police and find Blake and lodged partly under the car. By standards help them pull him into the open. Delusions from blood loss. Blake says over and over again, "I'm not gonna make it this time, cause I don't have no drugs in my body. I'm not gonna make it this time." As soon as he says this to another woman, "I am dying. Get me to the hospital because I don't want to die out here in front of the Maypen." The woman runs off to get her car.

A policeman arrives and finds what he later describes as a black male lying on the ground with large wounds, bleeding profusely. The policeman asks Blake these words: "Who shot you?" Each time he answers, "Tommy," which is Mark's nickname. "Had there been no argument?" No. "Had there been a drug transaction?" No. The ambulance screams up the avenue. The paramedic cuts away Blake's pants to get at the wounds. Then she slips him into rubber shock pants, which she inflates to keep up his blood pressure.

New an editorial writer for *The New York Times*, Brent Staples grew up in Chester, Pennsylvania, a declining industrial town, the oldest son among nine children. Schoolships took him to college and graduate school. As Staples's career blossomed, a younger brother began selling cocaine and eventually was murdered. His death helped spark the writing of Staples's memoir, *Parallel Tales* (Pantheon Books), an examination of his past and family, and of the disorienting yet revelatory journey back and forth between the occasionally mitigate, often disparate, worlds of black and white.

He says to the paramedic, "Trai saved," then passes out. He dies at the operating table.

**I**HOLD UP THE PHONE and went back to the dinner table. I told my lover that Blake had been murdered, and I continued eating. "Once I stopped and struck the name-black table with my fist, but usually I kept eating, because continuing to eat seemed a valid thing to do. My lover said something that I could not hear. Her lips were moving, but the words were far away. We finished dinner, and I sent her home. For a long time afterward I watched the towers in the black-velvet sky. I was determined not to go to the funeral. I mourned Blake and buried him in earth before he died. I would not suffer his death a second time."

**I**TRIED A WAY TO TALK about Blake's death. I tried writing but failed. After two or three paragraphs a smothering heat boiled up from my chest and onto my head. My thoughts became tangled and useless.

Then the writer Calvin Trillin appeared on my schedule of guests. Trillin was touring in support of his new book, *Adventures*, a collection of pieces from *The New York Times* about people who'd died violently and those who had killed them two families in a California barrio, locked into a cycle of murder, revenge, and murder, a movie producer who was shot when he got too close to his subjects, the hell folk of Kentucky. A Boston doctor turned evangelist, found dead in a hotel with a seventeen-year-old girl. My editor and thus she could take the story or leave it because the *New-Yorker* "had trillies" every week he wrote enough stories. But meeting Trillin and writing about him had a weird lassitude for me. I passed through the editor's objections and scheduled the interview.

We met at the Ritz-Carlton hotel. I was standing in the









Klein's double play, simply chic spring looks, bold shirts and ties

On Fashion: Woody Hochswender

# Calvin's Coup

**A**S DIANA VREELAND once said, "Elegance is refusal." That tidy maxim might also describe the design ethos of Calvin Klein, who was honored last month as designer of the year for both men's and women's fashions by the Council of Fashion Designers of America. It was the first time any designer has pulled off such a grand double play. Klein's signature is subtraction, the absence of decoration—the baubles, bangles,

beads, exaggerated silhouettes, and other faddish artifacts of the fashion business. Instead there is an emphasis on pure lines. Clean and modern are his bywords—which he repeats like a mantra, until eventually a song in.

This notion of refusal, of saying no to fashion in some cases—fashion that is at once too big, too loud, too showy—is important today as it ever was. And Woodard's idea seems endemic to all really stylish people. One can see the principle in almost a



Calvin Klein



Running man: Klein's men's-wear collection won the CFDA award for best design

note that Klein may have abandoned it after suffering a broken collarbone in a riding accident in the Hamptons.)

His recent women's collections have moved away from that country-house look to a more European, cutting-edge style that has made no called deconstructivist fashion seem wearable. This can be seen



The long, lean lines of Klein's jet-set fashions, above, and women, right

with a boniness at the shoulders and across the chest but a fluid line of waist suppression. And everything is influenced by the soft hand of the fabrics and the unconstructed tailoring.

If there is an element of excess in Klein's business, it is in his advertising, which is often more daring and over-the-top than his clothes.

But Klein, who dropped out of the ranks of men's-wear designers in the late '80s, has engineered a remarkable resurgence in the last several seasons. His new men's collection, produced by Gianni Gatti, the Italian apparel giant, made an immediate mark when they were introduced two years ago. The styling is no bland yet dated; the cut is progressive but well within the boundaries of traditional good taste. jacket lengths are long

and elegant; the shirts are clean and simple; the ties are bold and graphic. And everything is influenced by the soft hand of the fabrics and the unconstructed tailoring.

If there is an element of excess in Klein's business, it is in his advertising, which is often more daring and over-the-top than his clothes. The highly visible photo campaigns have attracted all kinds of attention. In New York last fall, a guerrilla feminist group defaced Klein's billboard advertisements featuring the willow model, Kristy Moss.

The group plastered statements with the words *FUCK ME OVER* and *MOON THE FUNK*. While this is ridiculous—Moss reportedly was like a horse—the spectacle of Misty



Mark yrkning at her window on practically every street corner in full view of passersby waiting for the bus, is, at the least, disconcerting.

Klein, who has pushed the boundaries of how fashion collections are presented for the AIDS Project Los Angeles benefit at the Hollywood Bowl last year, has used three hundred mostly nonprofessionals models. And his recent CK show in New York featured nonmodels recruited from an open casting call. This strategy emphasizes the star room and currency of his basic fashions and reinforces the minimalist message. He is a designer true to his own point of view.

# The New Simplicity

THE FASHION PEACOCKS have been strutting around a lot lately, but in the long run less is certainly more. Going with high-quality essentials—a white shirt, a cardigan, a black suit—is timeless and the real way to stand out from the flock.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY DICK NYSTROM



West vest, velvet trousers, and velvet shirt by Tom Ford; leather pour Baccarat. For dress by Miu Miu.



If wearing a black suit, white shirt, and black tie works for formal evenings, it ought to be just fine for any other occasion.

This page and opposite: Single-plateaued red-baked earthenware figures. (Opposite) front, side, and back; back-up chest by George Arment. (Top) Dressing table chest by Maudie Nichols. Photographed at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.

Silk-and-cotton cardigan, form-hugging short-sleeved shirt, wide-brimmed grosgrain hat, and wide-leg tie-dyed pants by Dennis Basso New York. His dress by Giorgio Armani. He's dressed by Giorgio Armani by Gabriele Khan Footwear. Photographed at Mandolay, Los Angeles.



The Nehru jacket is an ideal choice for anyone who prefers not wearing a tie; it allows the collar to be the focal point. And if you don't like wearing a sport jacket, try a cardigan (opposite)—it's not just for Mr. Rogers anymore.

Single-breasted wool suit with Nehru collar, ribbed-neck dress, and leather belt bag by Giorgio Armani. He's dressed by Giorgio Armani by Gabriele Khan Footwear. Photographed at the Guggenheim Museum of Art.

Wearing a suit with a T-shirt is once again a virtue and no longer a Miami vice—as long as the colors are dark (as opposed to sherbet) and you stay away from espadrilles.

Long-sleeved wool suit and leather lace-up shoes by Gianni Versace. Men's Flax by Ben Kenney. Long-sleeved cotton T-shirt by Gianni Versace. Shirt. Photographed at Marisol. Opposite page: Her dress by Versace. Photographed at Europa, Los Angeles.





Ripped cotton-and-silicon sweater by Dolce & Gabbana and trousers by Armani; cotton T-shirt by Juster. She dress by Dolce & Gabbana. Photographed at Sotheby's.

A trench coat doesn't have to be khaki or olive. Black is, as always, a little dressier; and a logical choice for fans of noir. And another idea for those who eschew neckwear: There's nothing simpler than a T-shirt and sweater (opposite).

Lower coat, black-and-white vest, and trousers by CK Calvin Klein. Her dress and sandals by Calvin Klein. Photographed at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art.



# How to Talk to Your Tailor

## The long and the short of it

ALLOWING A STRANGE MAN to fiddle between your legs with a piece of chalk—let alone a few pins—requires a certain amount of trust. But no matter how much faith you have in a tailor, there's no substitute for having firsthand knowledge of what he's doing. To take us on a behind-the-scenes tour of tailoring, we asked three experts—

Munno Spanò, director of tailoring at Bergdorf Goodman Men; Frank Marcus, director of alterations at Saks Fifth Avenue; and Troy Karouz, men's alterations manager at Barneys New York—to share their wisdom. The first thing to remember about going to a tailor, according to Barneys's Karouz, is to wear clothing comparable to your regular business attire. That's just to say you should show up in a shirt and tie (after all, many men only find time to shop on weekends), but avoid bulky sweaters or heavy shirts. Likewise, never wear sneakers or running shoes. Even loafers—if you normally wear low-cut shoes with a strap—can affect the fit.



Move, move, move! In the wall just as a tailor shows what he's done to the back and the sides, a tailor should let you look at everything when it's finished.

Try to relax. "Many men stand up so straight when they're being fitted," says Karouz. "It's unnatural." Nor that you should look as if you just left an audience for a *Miss Diana* ball—nobody walks through life with a hook balanced on her head.

Go to a tailor who has a three-way mirror. Most department stores will have one, but many private salons do not. A three-way mirror lets you look at every side of a suit—even the sides you don't want to see. "Any tailor who doesn't want to show you the back," says Bergdorf's Spanò, "is trying to hide something."

Develop a relationship with a tailor. Choosing a local tailor can often be tricky—especially in smaller cities. But in a department store, Karouz says, "Ask for the same fitter." After a while, he'll get to know your body and any personal fitting quirks.

Be mindful of materials. Some fabrics, such as Super 100 wool, gabardine, or linen, will look terrible if you let them out at all, because the crease will show. Others, such as silk or cashmere, can be scoured by chalk, so have them pressed.

And when a tailor's done a particularly good (or fast) job, the occasional tip wouldn't hurt. Who knows, it might even get you a free set of cuffs.

## Jacket requirements

"Look at the shoulders first," Spanò says. If your arms are pushing against the upper part of the sleeve, the jacket is too tight, and you should probably go up a size. If the shoulder padding



is hanging over your arms like eaves, the jacket's too big. "But understand the style of the jacket," says Spanò. "Sometimes it's not a question of fit but of cut."

To determine length, there is a strict tailoring rule, according to Spanò: Measure from the nape of the collar to the floor. Divide that number by two to get the proper jacket length.

And there's also a rule of thumb: Literally. With your hands at your sides, make a fist with the thumb pointing down. The jacket should end just a tad below it (see left). Recently, though, many designers have been asking jackets a bit longer, so it

may end a good inch below your thumb. But if the jacket ends above your fist, it's probably too short.

Sleeve length is a personal thing. Some men like to see a lot of cuff, some a little. (The standard is one-half inch.) Regardless of how much you like to show, ask the tailor to measure both arms, because they are rarely the same length.

As for the rest of the jacket, a tailor can close up vents, but he can't create them, so don't ask. Also, if you want the lapels made slimmer or wider, pick a new jacket. "Don't try to religion the soft," Karouz says.

## Doing a little legwork

Altering a jacket may seem like a difficult operation, but fitting pants is actually trickier. The truth is, as Spanò says, "You can take your jacket off, but you leave your pants on."

Obviously, the key to pants is in the waist. But there are limits. "There is not that much you can let out," warns Marcus. "Maybe two inches. Don't believe anyone who tells you he can let them out three or four." On the other hand, he says, "you can't take them in more than an inch and a half, two inches." If you do, the back pockets will be too close together, and the crease in the front will move from the center toward the outside (see below). The opposite is true when you let them out too much.

Pants length, like sleeves, is up to the individual.



Some like a full break, some like none. The safe bet is to go with a half break, meaning the trousers drape a bit and rest comfortably on the top of the shoe. Cuffs are also up to you. The standard width these days is one and a half inches, but tell your tailor how you like them—two inches, an inch and a quarter, whatever. And just as you had both arms measured for sleeves, make sure the tailor measures both legs.

Finally, when being fitted for trousers, look at the tailor in the mirror as he's pinning the legs. Though it is completely natural to do so, don't bend over to look at the length during the fitting. The reason, of course, is that as you bend over, the pants ride up on your legs, and your tailor, like Sam of song, will end up making the pants too long at



# Loud

# and Clear

Bold shirts and ties, from designers on both sides of the Atlantic, are once again grabbing attention. Vivid colors and powerful patterns shake up—and wake up—down-to-earth business suits.

Photographs by Troy Word



This page: Cotton shirt by J. Crew; silk/cotton tapestry blouse, double-breasted jacket by Talbot Runhof. Opposite page: (left) shirts from top to bottom: silk/cotton blouse, diamond tie by Edwards; (bottom) cotton polo shirt by Farnham; double-breasted jacket by Paul Stuart; diamond tie by Gucci; striped tie by Robert Talbott; jacket by Talbot Runhof; (right) Alexander Julian cotton shorts; (top) blouson by David Hart; Yves Saint Laurent; and (bottom) Reed



Cotton shirt by J. Crew; patterned silk tie by H. H. Kim; single-breasted freshwater shell-stripe wool suit by Pierre Cardin; watch by Gucci

Colors that complement one another always look sharp when pairing striking shirts and ties, but to really go for the bold (opposite), try ones that contrast.

Cotton shirt and silk tie by Esq. Esq.; double-breasted silk button-down shirt and tie by Gucci



No matter how dynamic its pattern or color, a shirt will probably be upstaged by the tie. And as with most things in life, nothing is as good as gold.

Or in short: If Brooks Brothers silk is in, Esquire's single-breasted three-button gets top. And wait 'till March comes out with leather shoes like these diamonds.





There aren't that many rules about shirts and ties anymore, but it's always best to play with proportion. For instance, try a tie with a large pattern or stripe for a striped shirt.

Untucked shirt and striped tie: Cerruti. Available-located in leather goods, wool and by Assembly. Address by Assembly.



Cotton shirt and double-breasted suit jacket with wide notched collar worn with tie by Gucci. Leather belt by Gucci. Tie by Gucci. Leather leather shoes by Salvatore Ferragamo. Hat by Cerruti. Watch by Omega.

Clothing by Louis Feraud. Metal of the Plaza Hotel, New York. Made in West Germany. Michael Bregin of Clark Brown of Boston.

For store information see page 116.

# Style Tribes

New, young looks come from the night. On these pages, three trendsetting groups that don't take their fashion lying down.

Photographs by  
Marc Hom

**The free spirits:** This nocturnal clique may herald an unlikely avant-garde. Ripped jeans, cat T-shirts, and shapeless, oversize sweaters give them a lost-boy look. Their scene is dance tracks, not needle tracks, despite the dreaminess of their demeanor. Their carefully considered grubbiness and just-woke-up attitude gain them entrée into chic New York nightclubs, like the movable Soul Kitchen, run by Frankie Ingless (top left).

**On the road:** (Clockwise from top left) The design: Frankie Ingless wears a ribbed sweater made by Calvin Klein and oversized jeans by CK Calvin Klein. Marisol Mark Rozen in bold-cut jeans made by CK Calvin Klein and T-shirt from Fred of the Least. Sean Rivers, an actor and singer and a bartender at the Royalton Hotel, in knee-and-crotch-pullover and cotton long-sleeve top by CK Calvin Klein. David Stuck, a dancer and skateboarder, wears an oversized T-shirt by CK Calvin Klein. And singer Sora Rauss in cotton pants and top by CK Calvin Klein. And designer Sean Rivers in cotton pants and T-shirt by CK Calvin Klein.





**Simple chic:** New club owners, like Buddha Bar proprietor Frederick Lesser (standing, front), and other worldly men-about-town sport a cleaner, more responsible look that owes its gestalt to New York's European invasion. It's almost a uniform: turtleneck, jeans, boots, Balenciaga. Puftail optional.

From left: Carlo Sestini, a leather-delivery designer, wears a cotton turtleneck from Paul Smith; the jeans and boots are his own. Giacomo Cianfan, an ex-model and actor, Frederick Lesser, and Guillermo Gutiérrez d'Argenio, a boxer and North American representative for Ferragamo, all wear cashmere- and silk-turtlenecks by Balenciaga with their own jeans and boots.



**Rebel dandies:** Like the original British art-rock band, the Kinks, their look is dressy but decadent, nattily unkempt, and just plain kinky. With their frizzy hair and dark-circled eyes, however, these followers of fashion seem somewhat more dissipated than dedicated

Opposite page and above center: Model Gabriel Hill wears striped three-button menswear jacket, wool vest, silk shirt, lace-gum-plaid trousers, pocket square, and silk tie by Romeo Gigli; satin bows by Tally Weijl. Above left: Model Albert Montgomery wears a cotton vestcoat, vest, shirt, shell-corpse wool trousers, silk tie, and wool bow tie by Romeo Gigli. Above right: Model Jason Gaudet wears a long-brak coat by Paul Smith; T-sock sweater-vest by PS Paul Smith; cotton shirt, wool trousers, silk tie, and silk bow tie by Romeo Gigli. All grooming by Dennis Goff.

For store information see page 222.

Style Tribes



## CARS

Phil Patton

# An Olds by Any Other Name

**T**HE ONLY PLACE THE WORD Oldsmobile appears on the 1993 Aurora, die in showrooms this month, is in little tiny letters on the radio or stereo speakers on the premium Bose Acoustronic sound system. A couple of years ago, in General Motors' darkest days, there was talk of dropping altogether the name that has been Eh Olds first applied to mass-produced automobiles when Henry Ford was still milking it as a cash cow. The Aurora GM has come pretty close.

The absence of the Olds name on the new car is a sign that the Aurora is what Detroit calls an auto car, designed to change the image of the brand. The Manta made you think differently about Mazda, the Vigor about Dodge—and with surprising speed. So think of the Aurora less as an Oldsmobile than as an Aerostar.

To the last decade in Detroit has proved anything is up the hood there that the world the financial news, the better the car you can look forward to a couple of years down the line. First Ford, with the Taurus, then Chrysler, with its LH cars, are the pattern. Now GM has quietly begun building great cars again at the top of the line—Cadillac—and pretty darn good ones at the bottom—Sunsan, another nameplate whose auto has been born with widespread public ignorance that it's part of GM. Olds dealers have been born to the constituency for reeducation by eager Sunサン salesmen. And Olds engineers have been silent to school by the boys in Cadillac.

Aurora is meant for the chassis driving golden age of the down, in case the alarm slipped by. But Aurora was also the name of a Cadillac show car of a few years ago, which suggests how much Olds can contribute to it. The Automobile may even be able to sell an Olds than a small Caddy. It uses a 190-horsepower version of the much-praised Cadillac Northstar V-8 engine, which puts out power at 6000 and smooth as Wilton Rayon off-scale. And Aurora is being built in GM's high-tech Ontario manufacturing facility, which was one of the reasons Cadillac won the Baldrige Quality Award. With its antilock brakes, traction control, dual air bags, and 30,000 price, Aurora is meant to take on Acura and Lexus, but some Caddy critics grumble that all the things they're getting for their help

is a chance to see Olds steel sides from their sun-soaked Seville. Good auto, like good looks, depends on the relevance of the past as much as the promise of the future. In the 1980s, Olds ads were better than its cars. Everyone remembers the ad line "This is not your father's Oldsmobile," but most people suspected your father's was better, even if they couldn't quite remember the reason. Dad bought an Olds to begin with. The reasons were simple: features like the Hydra-Matic, the first automatic transmission, introduced in 1939, and the first high-compression V-8s, the legendary Rocket, in 1949. Dragged into a Model 88, that engine made Olds a NASCAR star and inspired Jackie Branton to create the first rock 'n' roll song, "Rocket 88."

To lay claim to that tradition, and to silence skeptics, Olds engineers installed an Aurora engine in a car we loaded it down to a test track in Fort Stockton, Texas, and saw it not stop for eight days at 150 miles an hour, breaking an endurance record held by Mercedes' five-litre, chief Olds designer Dennis Adler also looked back to your father's Oldsmobile—or one of them, the classic 1968 "Tornado."

Burke was in junior high when he saw the fan spy shot of that car—"You want, 'Wow!' It was so radical"—which pulled body and roof into a single taupe shape, with boldly slanted arches around its wheels and a cockpit whose less than friendly angled eye. In the Aurora, Burke arrived for the same impact: a single sculptural shape framing the wheels, with the massive look of a fighter fuselage and—for contrast with the curves—a dramatic flat slant of sunlight panel across its back. Stamped of Olds' standard classic goings-on, the Aurora looks best at an angle: pause the show car when you play up what Burke calls the car's surface emanations, "the drop of light" on its contours, and make the metal dissolve into, well, an aura of sheer energy.

Aurora's sounded, embracing interior pines with the F-15 shapes of the exterior; its aero is the satisfying, aerodynamic look of a Subie cockpit. And to this Oldsmobile's new mass market, the new car makes extensive use of recycled materials: plastic from soft-drink bottles, more components from general cars. So today's Aurora may not only be imagined by yesterday's Thermos, it may be made of one. ■

### Aurora Technical Features

**Engines:** Four-liter dual overhead cam V-8, 200-horsepower

**Transmissions:** Four-speed Hydra-Matic (T-8);

**Amperage:** 0 to 80 in 2 seconds

**Top speed:** 120 mph

**Fuel economy:** 18 mpg city, 23 highway

**Other features:** Magnetic assist-variable-assist power steering; four-wheel antilock brakes with traction control; Dual air bags; and 30,000 price. Aurora is meant to take on Acura and Lexus, but some Caddy critics grumble that all the things they're getting for their help

**Base price:** \$31,695

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3 Easy Entanglement User included	Patented locking system for easy lifting, easy locking.	None	None
4 Butterfly Unit included	One piece unit.	One piece unit.	One piece unit.
5 Weight conditions for all five major muscle groups	Patented蝴蝶形 weight lifting system for all five major muscle groups.	Two most popular weight lifting systems for legs and press.	Patented butterfly system for all five major muscle groups.
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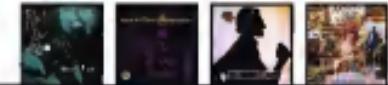


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## MUSIC

Mark Jacobson

# They Wear Black, They Eat Grits

**T**HAT WAL-MART the blue-gassed valleys, put a satellite dish on every flat spot, shank-werp the emuls, but the South just goes stranger and stranger.

God damn it purchased heart Reminds me of the time I got my ass kicked forty miles outside Montgomery. Probably I shouldn't have but that perfect nine-ball shot isn't in that bar, for sure not for money. It was slow-motion then the pain on that loser's face, ring-fingered fast flicking through red-blade swords. He stood coming up Cinemascope. The red ball part, though, was lying on the vinyl, boots denting sand, and that right little hand playing 'you radio sinner. Here I was vacationing in the great American South, source of all song and soul, and they're covering Lee Michaels.

Squeeze my lesson till I show "Fire Bed" but next time I'm shatlocked in a peckerwood bar I'm holding out for more dissonance chord changes I'll get 'em too off the stack of CDs in front of me. 'Cuz, like the South itself, sub-Mexican-Douglas drinking man, just get more strange.

Much of this fact owes to the rise over the past decade or so of the "bar-sign" band. "Bargin" is a new bin in the of postmodern marketplace, a recombinant mix of the horizon's rigorously fermenting retrograde (you get paid in bars, so you've got to know how to play some at least) and the garage's chockful eccentric assist. Historically viewed, bargin can be said to have sprung from the many head of Alex Chilton, the underslung Rhodian colossus of under-

ground southern pop. Those who were sentent every odd years ago may recall Chilton as a teenage Box Top in a Niobe jacket singing "The Lovers," which got huge though "Like a Baby" was greater. By 1977 Chilton was in black leather on the stage of CBGB, a crossover move with a propagandist effect on the nascent garage scene.

Landmark second- to third-generation garage can be beheld in the corners of the much beloved Southern Culture on the Skids, fronted by Fred Miller but more Hawaiian hide than Don Mc. S.C.O.T.S.'s long accompanied the lurches of beer-sodden Piedmont frat boys with songs like "Barnyard Ballbuster" ("I sit on my macker and cry ... 'cause you're a barnyard ballbuster, I know that I couldn't trust ya"). More or less were weird (and surreal) are the likewise minimalistic Flea Joes, household of Confederate Dealer Roeweb, who, according to reports, slept in a coffin on back of his parent's house and the shed, called the Mississippi, burned down. Recorded at Chapel Hill's Krupps Studios, the Joes' mean "What This [S]ky" is a masterpiece of English-major garage. His voice fluidly dancel-optics and unexpected metallic riffs. Roeweb's big issue concerns. He sees John Wayne Gary at his dog stinks and tells how "I ate dinner with Van Gogh, I was in Egyptian pharaohs. I'm an old soul." When he sings about being a "husband of a country singing star" who left him to go to Tishler capital Gathalberg you fear another intense portion of we-all-live-in-trader-parks

post-Dollywoodish. But then Roeweb reports that the couple's child "died at birth," and it's suddenly very sad Cheap and, but sad still.

Beyond such self-representational issues in concert band Hand, (proto-revived Austin) Adkins, a legitimate rockabilly legend, Hand, member of Mission, West Virginia, is, like so many who have played here, probably better live. You put his stuff on at home and your significant other might just throw a running shoe at the CD player. Hand'll clear a room faster than Albert Ayler. Other than that, he's a person known as the Lone One, the fifty-something Hand, who is said to be in the habit of eating two pounds of raw hamburger prior to performance and not sleeping for two weeks at a time, operates with an alacrity to make the young Jerry Lee Lewis appear a Quasimodo casualty. Pioneer of a country-thrash guitar the Flea Bazaar might envy, he also plays thrash harmonica and thrash drums, all at the same thrash rate. But, till the truth, reach as Handless call for "Baby We Got a That" ("... I cut off your hand at night").

the ballads are too sweet. That's because Hand can sing real beautiful if he wants to. Investigate "My Blue Star" on *Look at That Country Girl* (Norton Records), a tune that beats most up the whole Hand chart.

It is a tribute to the southern capacity to needs the bizarre at its horizon houses that there's territory beyond Hand Adkins that's where Daniel Johnston lives. Scouring way too close for comfort to a postbaudian, John son—who's recently interested in Eric, Hope, and a girl named Laurie—has created a burgeoning song cycle of deliberately balanced, yet often exceedingly painful, maledictory. Looking at his unposed visage on the inside cover of *Armenia Vir (at the Skinny Dog)* (self-recorded in "Chuck Pickle's house, West Virginia") while listening to him sing how "life is swimming over, again" can be, um, unsettling.

But on the (and on) Vic Chesnutt. It says on the puristic little autoharpish piano they give you with Chesnutt's most recent CD, *Dusk* (Bias House), that he is "the dawndrest, when grudge," the greatest songwriter since Dylan, more authentic than the Sex Poodles. Several of his earlier CDs were produced by burrige slackeras Mathel Stipe (of R.E.M.), but still, that's a lot to call a guy you never heard of singing in a bar, a much less studied Tom Waits is more like it. But there is something worse about Vic Chesnutt, something more about Vic Chesnutt, sitting there in his wheelchair, where he's been since that unfortunate night of drunk driving, a near paraplegic. Only twenty-eight but his voice already croaky and broken, Vic sits near to me, mumble, singing songs like "When I Ran OE and Left Her" ("When I run off and left her she won't hold a baby/but she was holding a hornet/a big grudge against me"). He rhymes "paraphrase" with "monsoon/milk" and anna has more shoulds, quist like. Somewich is says the bar is big, analastic, and full of potential emotional re-dangoon. Then Vic sings song "One of Many," which, strange enough, threatens a Steven Smith poem "about a child who got stung by a bee/told he was only one of many, so he threw his fellow/s in a ditch and got bent for it." but we've all felt like that.

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## BOOKS

Will Blythe

## Doing Laundry at the End of History

**F**UMIO FURUTAMA, that wacky fan-fiction apocryphon, asserted in 2010 that the end of history was in hand. In dispassionate apparently meant that one day we would all live in liberal democracies and consume to our heart's content. That would be cool, right? For a cool atheist in Kazanov, Poland, history's departure might indeed be cause to break out the vodka (but for the world-wary North American youth of Douglas Coupland's fiction, whose been stuck at the end of history for quite some time already, living there is about as exhilarating as bursting down at your parents' house after you've finished school. It's not a bad place for hanging out and doing laundry, but who really wants to keep living there?)

The selflessness of postmodern life at history's end (a region that looks remarkably like the West Coast) is, in fact, the maximal encapsulation of Coupland's writing. The Canadian-born author has advanced a reputation as a wry spokesman for Generation X, a title he did much to popularize by using it as the title of his first work of fiction. He seems to spend a good bit of time concocting our glosses of ideologies such as "Mojib" and "emotional landscape burst" that are subsequently published in *The New York Times* and *The New Republic*. Boy, those publishers must be hipper than we thought. Coupland's connoisseurs may have great reverence for his culture, but they shake me at McDonald's, the meating noodlings of a terminally clever teenage sociologist. His three works of fiction, however, including the rich and panoramic new collection *Life After God* (Fiction Books), are a revelation, especially if you ignore the amazement and the surprisingly up-to-date edge that lead you to mistakenly assume Coupland of being his generation's Richard Brautigan.

This fiction might actually make you like Brautigan's (in one other crucial respect—the seemingly inadvertent plotlessness of his tales, the way they shake and wobble like an old and creaky) *Atlas Shrugged*. The portraits of three slackers in Generation X, for all of their psychological stuff, often read like case studies in solipsism. Though the sources possess a maddeningly venenomousness, they lack the addictive velocity that narrative fiction provides. But then you realize that such bordering-on-peloponnesian inane likely Coupland's brave gamble with the reader's allegiance: a risk he takes in order to convey a peculiarly upper-middle-class habit of feeling safely—and horribly—outside of history and story alike. "My life had become a series of scary incidents that simply weren't stringing together to make for an interesting book," Coupland's bar-

render in Generation X. He and his peers hark wistfully on the periphery, watching and watching TV and plotting trips and collecting enterprises while trying to imagine some larger narrative in which they'd like to play a part. They end up floating around like astronauts outside of their own lives and culture, unable to connect to history in their ownness and early thirties, they're still on the verge of despair, can wait to work it all in love. What exactly would be the point, dude? The offspring of disease, the inbombers of a diminished economy, and the very synapses of mass culture, they know the endings to every tale of too soon.

The characters' precious knowledge results in their broadcasting a kind of reflexive irony, dense with reference to strongly disengaged moments of pink cube-like *The Body Shop*. Of course, math is golden only if you're in on the joke. Among the many rewarding aspects of taking the Coupland seriously is that such an enlightened stance offers a sneaky way of separating yourself from the unversed, for whom history is merely trap. It demonstrates that you're a citizen of culture, not a mere consumer. You pop-culture jocks that you are, can see the show behind the show behind the show. Admittedly, such modern American generation—and class—speaks a secret language, partly to shore up its identity, but there's something especially poignant about the way the spokespeople for Generation X so insistently celebrate the cultural insinuation of their childhood long past the age of consent. Hey, party on, Gorth.

In the end, this generation speaks with the ambivalence of people who have spent a lot of time talking back to commercials. No matter how vicious the back talk is, hardly unreciprocal. After all, everybody's just sitting there, watching TV. Mass culture seems as much an unavoidable given as the Old Testament God. That Tyler Johnson, the yuppie wanna-be of Coupland's novel *Shapeless Plane* (he wants to turn landfill into historical theme park), is media savvy and overexposed with information doesn't mean he wants to be unplugged. In fact, when he goes to visit his biological father at a hippie commune, he nearly cringes in terror at the lack of brand-name food products. Get that brown rice out of here!

The point of *Life After God*, Coupland's most accomplished fiction to date, is that eventually there comes a time when story is insufficient. Much like death, dawning though the may be, is just not a sustainable option through one's dark night of the soul, not even for the deadpan sons and daughters of Lennieman. In *Life After God*, the narrative—in their

## BOOKS

thirsts and suffering from divorce, breakdown, and deep lethargy—find themselves in an onward pursuit of spiritual life. As the first American generation raised within the religion they're not much disposed by traditional forms of spiritual practice. Suggest even a non-sacred religion like Buddhism to a Generation Xer, and it's easy, if you've read a little Coupland, to imagine the deadpan but sincere retort: "Buddhism? Right. How Reduced G."

But still they search. "I need God," admits the minister of "Love Year—Life After God," who packs his antidepressants and ends up alone in a man-scaled forest in British Columbia, playing in a pop one. Coupland's seeking goes off by themselves in No Place—old-life nowhere of American desert and forest sites that have been uncorrupted by pop quest or media filth. They prefer to start from scratch, building an entire religion out of personal brushes and intuition. Unfortunately, creating your own personal religion is a little harder than constructing a sandal at Puma Hat. Whether such a jury-build approach can succeed is a question the book doesn't really. The protagonist of the remarkable "In the Desert," for instance, practices driving as a form of "enforced meditation." On his way through the West to deliver an illegal shipment of steroids, he fulfills his own self-thinking that there might not actually be anything to believe in. The story is suffused with a mystery and aigma unique in Coupland's work.

At one point in this revelatory read, the narrative is given pause by the risible of articulating just what he does believe, a task "made more difficult," he says, "because I had been raised without religion by parents who had broken with their own pasts and moved to the West Coast—who had raised their children clear of any ideology in a carefree, modern house overlooking the Pacific Ocean—at the end of history, or so they had wanted to believe." A bare hint of irony goes that passage a silly sing, common to much of Coupland's fiction, but it really reads more like a half-wit confidante of insights despite. No one escapes the inauspicious history, especially not a generation that was given everything but spiritual resources.

Mr. Fukuyama, please take note. ■



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Julie Baumgold

## Marla Maples Takes Five

**O**h, sir towe, my darling, I longer for your touch." Could there be a whiter wedding? It's a winterland bower: a snow-blinding ice fence dripping with frosty fairy crystals and weeping willows made of white orchids and ribbons; and Marla Maples is marrying Donald Trump in the Grand Ballroom of the Plaza Hotel under the crystal chandeliers.

In front of me, on Marla's side of the aisle, is a kinsup of Dako Draves with gauzy balloons of cosily, rounched hair and big-shouldered beaded dresses—red, blue, green—the kinds of fancy things that grow sold in stores and malls waiting for occasions. All the dresses have keyhole backs, which imply no brasieres, and all the women are sitting real southern and straight as if they are being studied. If I gaze my hair is staring forth com low. If I take my dancing lessons and have good posture, I may grow up to marry Donald Trump is what these state, helpful backs say.

"They've all got great tits," says Ronald Heiners, a Vermonter aristocrat, husband of Carolina—the designer of the wedding dress—a man who can no longer keep himself from speaking French. But everyone is overcome. The candlelight bounces off the sequins, and the use bubbles make and shower in atmosphere as "Stranger in Paradise" plays to the cheering throng and I wonder why I am here, taxes you again. "Do you know how despicable he is?" Every Trump story begins, and the men tell them in behind desks as big as Trump's and there are so many plagues on the wall.

Marla Maples' silence when Jessie used to mean Once, when Donald accidentally locked her out of their apartment in Atlantic City before a Pavarotti concert, she complained to me that she hadn't had "some extra five minutes that a woman really needs." It was her nose.

"Sarah wants to know how long it will be," says Ronald—as "That Is My Beloved" is played. Sarah, who is English, is telling a story about Celine Dion and the Rolling Stones.

"Toss the gauze set in, let the horses. April one, can we go?" says Ronald, looking over at the Trump side and

poring out Trump's balconies, one of whom does indeed get dressed for the beautiful wedding. "Il y'a pas de monde à New York ce soir," says Ronald, "no parapluie. Mais Attentive: 'Toss an apple for her. I can't help it,'" says Ronald, meaning that he has a weakness, as do we all, even those who know better. Many heads are bashed over, many pens are running, and Liu Smith is changing her position to see better.

"And her manners are surprise. She was and thanked all the women who sewed the dress and posed for pictures with them. Beautiful manners, to thank the little people," says Ronald.

"They're having a problem with the hair," says Caroline Heiners, entering the row. "Two of them are doing it: braiding it and taking it down." Caroline comes from the kind of world where you put your mother-in-law's emerald and diamond rings together for a pin because your hand is too small to wear such large stones. That is something you and your husband know even as little children—what is simple and nice and what is not.

"It may be the name," I say, but Caroline shakes her head with the blond hair combed back hard and shiny. There's a place for us nobles as the Trumps come in—Marie, his name, the federal judge, his other sister, the Robin Trumps, half covered from head to toe with blood; his brother-in-law who oversiegans Indian casinos on the side. To the bride's side, because they are late, comes fund manager David Boersman, who also has his hair combed back hard and shiny, and his wife, Rosalie. She sits next to Caroline and they whisper.

Môte of hours, me heart, the music commences to the unshouldered, white silk bridal carpet is unrolled for the wedding of a man who is going married to the mother of his fourth child because twenty-five people were gunned down on the Long Island Railroad and, boy, life is short and he's about to go public with his cancer. When a helicopter crashed in 1984, killing his then top successor, Trump decided to divorce Ivana. Death leads Trump to momentous decisions.

"I consider us inbreeds," says Ronald.

"Marla's grandfather," say the [joined on page 175]



**Not a wet eye in the house:** Donald and Marla at their reception. And they said it wouldn't last.



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